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QUARTERLY REVIEW OF RECORDS

With a Note on the Caxton Hall Tests

By THE EDITOR

THIS is the last quarterly review that I shall write. I feel like one of those enthusiastic frogs who got rid of King Log and set up King Stork. I bow my head, partly in humble gratitude to the recording companies and partly to protect it against the shower of new discs. Like a babe in the wood—or should I say the Sir Henry Wood?—I lie buried beneath a weight of discs which the birds of the recording rooms place on my prostrate form. "We have released six Beethoven symphonies," announces the Parlophone Company proudly. That just describes what they have done; and they are running wild on Jethou at this moment. In future I shall try to keep up with the monthly output in the next month's number of THE GRAMOPHONE. I am unwilling to make this change; but as things are at present it is really impossible to make this review readable, and I think that I am better qualified nowadays to give a quick opinion of a record than I was two years ago.

The outstanding production of this quarter for myself has been the issue on six double-sided

records of Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique*. I was unaware that it was on the verge of being "released" (I do beg the recording companies not to borrow this detestable expression from the cinema, that great corrupter of the English language) when I asked for it in my last review, though my remarks must have seemed like ground-bait for our readers. To my mind this is the best orchestral recording achieved by the gramophone up to date. Apart from the remarkable quality of the string tone and the exceptional timpani, the brass is much better managed than usual and never sounds as if a small boy at a fair had suddenly blown a tin trumpet in one's ears to pierce them above the noise of distant roundabouts. The symphony itself is full of melody. I can't think why we never had that waltz to dance to in the days when we used to waltz. It's as good a waltz as exists. It reminds me curiously of the *andante* in one of Mozart's *Divertimenti*. The whole work has something of the quality of a Balzac novel. It's no use trying to enjoy Berlioz unless you have some sense of the drama, and if musical

pedants argue that a sense of the drama is not required to appreciate music, I retort that unless you have a sense of drama you can't appreciate Beethoven. Half the depreciation of Beethoven nowadays comes from people who have no conception of drama outside the melancholy struggles that take place in their own digestive organs.

The Columbia issue of the *Enigma Variations* conducted by Sir Henry Wood is not nearly so good as the H.M.V. issue conducted by Sir Edward Elgar himself. The interpretation is rough and casual. The phrasing is confused like a bad elocutionist's. To be sure, we have lost the scratch; but in losing the scratch we don't want to lose the claws as well. Another of my criticisms last quarter was answered in advance by the Columbia Company's printing the title of the work on the back of the album that contains it. Now, may I recommend flaps to the envelopes like those used by the Parlophone Co. in their admirable albums? While reading the excellent analysis printed on the Columbia envelopes I got up in a hurry to change the record that was playing, with the result that one of the discs hurtled out and was smashed to pieces on the floor. I was upset for the moment, because I feared I was in for seven years' bad luck through breaking a mirror. However, the smashed disc was not so much like a mirror as some of the others in this set, and I am hoping it will be all right.

The Columbia issue of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* conducted by Weingartner is a dull version. If anybody cares to know what is my idea of the way the *finale* should be taken, let him invest in the Toscanini record published by the Victor Company. Glorious! I once said that Sir Landon Ronald conducted the *Fifth Symphony* as if it was an omnibus. Well, Weingartner's *finale* is like an elderly lady trying to catch that omnibus. Nor can I praise highly the Parlophone version conducted by Weissmann. However, it is sound enough, and at the price this is certainly the best value for money of any complete issue at the moment. What a pity that the old H.M.V. issue of the Berlin Philharmonic under Nikisch was so lamentably recorded! Now, that *was* the *andante*. If only the horns at the beginning didn't sound as if the parlourmaid had slipped downstairs with the breakfast tray! When we get this electric recording, I hope that we shall also get an electric bâton for the *Fifth*. Koussevitzky would be my choice.

The enterprise of the Parlophone Company in issuing, or as they prefer to say "releasing," the nine symphonies of Beethoven had turned this heat wave into a sound wave. As I had chosen the same period to indulge in a debauch of Polydor Beethoven symphonies, I've had such a doing of them as might cure a less devoted worshipper.

Next month I shall be dealing with the Polydor records that I have received, and I will reserve till then my list of choices for people who want all the Beethoven symphonies and are now hesitating between this and that version. I will say at once that all these six issues by the Parlophone strike me as better than the 7th, 8th, and 9th which they issued first.

From Parlophone, too, comes Strauss's *Heldenleben*. I heard this when it was first played in England round about twenty years ago. In those days *A Hell of a Life* seemed an apter translation than *A Hero's Life*. Now it seems so easy, so graceful, and so melodious where grace and melody are intended, and not particularly ferocious where ferocity is implied. The only theme I seem to recognise from the composer's other works is the dance of the tailors in the *Bourgeois Gentleman*. I don't know whether the occurrence of that in the earlier portion is intended to indicate the hero's pre-occupation with clothes as a young man. These are very good records indeed. I hope we shall have *Don Quixote* soon. The Parlophone *Tod* is to my taste the best of the three *Tods* we have. The drum at the beginning is splendidly managed, and doesn't sound like the nurse tapping on a tin of digestive biscuits in the sick man's room, as it does in the Columbia version. An interesting pair of records from the same company is the *Siegfried Idyll* conducted by Siegfried Wagner himself. I am afraid it is like Johnson's lady who preached. He doesn't do it well, but one is surprised to hear him doing it at all. If you haven't got the *Siegfried Idyll*, I have no hesitation in recommending the Vocalion version, played by the Chamber Orchestra as much the best that has hitherto been issued. I find that I want to play this at 82. Any confirmation from greater experts than myself? These strike me as exceptionally good records, and don't forget that like the Parlophone's they only cost 4s. 6d. each. The second *Peer Gynt Suite* from Parlophone comes off capitally. The *Dance of the Arabs* is so realistic that it frightened my Siamese cat, and she's used to queer noises, what with some of our English tenors on the gramophone and two vivacious Amazon parrots in the verandah.

A genial record from Columbia is Brahms' *Academic Overture*. We should like the *Tragic Overture* now. H.M.V. gave us one of Debussy's *Nocturnes*—a pleasant little work with lots of good timpani effects. Ponchielli's *Dance of the Hours* is not so successful as it ought to be. I have a better Fonotipia record of this. The Brunswick *Freischütz Overture* is good, but not so good as the H.M.V. version, and it costs eighteenpence more. Their other orchestral record of the *allegretto* from Brahms' *Second Symphony* and Sibelius' *Finlandia* is also good, but much too expensive. By far the best

single orchestral record of this quarter is *Siegfried's Journey to the Rhine* issued by Columbia and conducted by Bruno Walthers. This easily displaces any other records of this lovely piece of music.

We have had plenty of good chamber music. The Flonzaley Quartet disc from H.M.V. of two movements of Haydn's *Quartet in G* is a miracle of playing and recording. The London String Quartet have celebrated their return to Columbia by giving Haydn's *Emperor Quartet*. A little thin perhaps, but nevertheless delightful. I don't think that the L.S.Q. records should cost 7s. 6d. apiece.* They are not nearly so good a combination as the English String Quartet, which made a brief appearance on Columbia before going over to H.M.V. as the Virtuoso Quartet. I don't think that they are as good as the Catterall Quartet, which has recently made great strides in recording. Their second Beethoven quartet just issued is beautifully played. I think we may assume that this combination will give us all the first half-dozen complete. They will be a treasure. To novices in chamber music I specially recommend that early quartet of Haydn's in F, played by the Lener Quartet and complete on two records—an exquisite little thing. The *andante cantabile* from this was one of the first snippets that the Lener Quartet played. I think that this should have been mentioned in the bulletin, but I suppose it might be claimed that purchasers of chamber music should be familiar with opus numbers and keys. The last movement from Schubert's *Trout Quintet* comes from Parlophone. Of course, it's one of the jolliest tunes you could hear, but the recording is very poor. A xylophonic piano; and the double-bass, which takes the place of the second violin, was watered, I'm afraid. Perhaps some of the river got into it when the trout was landed.

The performance of Bach's *Chaconne* by Lionel Tertis provides two wonderful records from Columbia. I have noticed that all the unaccompanied string recordings are the best. Evidently the piano is still a terrible handicap. Listening to the *Chaconne* is rather like waking up in the middle of the night to find that the mosquito net has collapsed on top of you and trying to get hold of the matches; or like hearing a player tuning up his instrument and wondering when he's going to begin. But once you've resigned yourself to the fact that he never is going to begin and possibly never going to finish, all is well. But, joking apart, these really are wonderful records. It is reassuring to read in the H.M.V. bulletin for July that Erika Morini is a woman, every inch of her. It would be unwise, I think, to "release" a new celebrity violinist merely on account of any unfortunate physical peculiarity. Anyway, she makes her

bow in England, or, being every inch a woman, I should say curtsy, with a charming record of the *Romance* from Wieniawski's *Concerto* and a *Capriccio Valse* of the same composer.

The other violinist to whom I would draw your attention this quarter is Miss Peggy Cochrane in the Aco list. She has a really fine tone and both her records (2s. 6d.) are first rate, particularly the one with the Tchaikovsky melody. Let me suggest that the Aco people publish one of Beethoven's unrecorded violin sonatas complete with Miss Cochrane and Mr. Maurice Cole. Nothing venture, nothing win. Since I published my articles on chamber music in THE GRAMOPHONE I have had so many letters from people who are longing to embark on the adventure of chamber music, but who simply cannot find the money to equip themselves with enough records to make a fair start. And if the Aco people will choose for their experiment chamber music unrecorded by other companies, I wager that all our chamber music fans will support them. The production of unnecessary records at this moment is rivalling the production of unnecessary books. Then there is a slump, and the recording companies are hurt by the public's apathy. Why are people buying Polydor records at this moment? Because they are finding in the Polydor list works they cannot find in English lists. There is always a public for something that is wanted. It looks such a flat truism in print, and yet neither the artists who record nor the companies who record them seem to have grasped it. Why have the Parlophone records had such a remarkable vogue? Not merely because they are cheap, but because they have issued music that cannot be obtained from their rivals' lists. I hope that the Vocalion Company will bear this in mind. They are giving us some splendid recordings; they have improved their surface out of recognition; and their records are, as a technical product, the finest value for money in the world. But their monthly bulletin is still badly planned. It shows every sign of a lack of musical policy. To take an instance or two, they have Jelly D'Aranyi and her sister, Adela Fachiri, two violinists of the first rank. Well, why not let us have one of the violin concertos that are urgently required? They have a splendid violoncellist in Howard Bliss. Why not some of the violoncello sonatas? Why not a violoncello concerto? Of course, I know what will happen in a minute. Every company will decide to do the same violoncello concerto. Why doesn't the Vocalion Company institute the revolution of announcing its spring and autumn lists like a publisher? This game of blind-man's-buff is childish. If we know that the Vocalion intends to issue Beethoven's *Fourth Piano Concerto* next autumn and another company jumps in with it first, I believe I can pledge my word that our readers

* NOTE.—Written before the welcome news of a reduction in the Light Blue prices reached me.

will be sportsmen and support the company that took them into their confidence. If I wished, I could by a little secret service work find out everything that is on the stocks of every company, and I am only deterred from publishing such a list by the hope that this fatuous cut-throat policy will presently cease. There are moments when I feel inclined to call on my readers to strike from buying any records for three months in order to prove that I am not writing in this vein merely to amuse myself, but to voice a genuine grievance of the record-buying public.

Of the piano records this quarter one stands out above the rest, and that is Paderewski's playing of Schubert's *Impromptu in A*. At the beginning of the second side there are some doubtful moments with the bass, but it is the only record that does faintly reproduce the magic of the greatest pianist we have, and as such must not be overlooked.

I cannot devote the space I should like to devote to the singing records, because I must write my impressions of the tests, and make a few remarks on other topics. The record that stands out in my memory this quarter is the 10in. disc of McCormack singing two of Rachmaninoff's lovely songs. *To the Children* is to my taste one of the most moving performances that can be found in any catalogue. The next best record for me came from the Parlophone, in which Heckman-Bettendorf and Melchior sing the duet between Elizabeth and Tannhäuser in the second scene of the second act.

The Toti Dal Monte records from H.M.V. are not as good as the first one of the *Lucia* mad scene. Her *Una voce* is considerably inferior to Galli-Curci's rendering. Her voice becomes bat-like in the very high notes, and once or twice I was in doubt if she was singing or screaming. She reminds me of Tetrizzini, but the greatest *coloratura* sopranos must surely have had in their voices the warmth of humanity. There is not much humanity in Dal Monte, and I base this criticism on her rendering of *Deh, vieni non tardar*. Galli-Curci may have disappointed us in the flesh, but on the gramophone she is still unapproachable in *coloratura*. There is a sweetness and plangency about her voice at its best which none of her contemporaries that I have heard can touch.

The records of Jeritza, on the other hand, are much better than her first two, but they still want careful playing to get the best out of them. I think it just deserves to be called a thrilling voice.

I hope that the connoisseurs are not missing any of the Ezio Pinza records as they appear. He is definitely the best bass now singing for the gramophone apart from Chaliapine. Eric Marshall has been a disappointment since he has been singing on H.M.V. labels. The Vocalion Company were much more successful with his voice. Why do all

sopranos sing *The Lass with the delicate air*? It is an idiotic song to choose. We should like this from John Coates, who, by the way, gives us a splendid record this quarter of Josef Holbrooke's *Come not when I am dead*—a very moving song, and *Sigh no more, ladies*. I have a great admiration for Miss Elsie Suddaby, but I don't want her *Lass with the delicate air*. Henschel's *Spring* on the other side is really exquisite.

The Dinh Gilly record of the *Pagliacci Prologue* in English is first-class. So is the Gerhardt record. Likewise the Frieda Hempel record. Mr. Derek Oldham is proving a serious rival to Mr. Tudor Davies in showing us how not to sing. I'm not surprised that his mistress went roaming if he sang high and low to her as he sings on record E.385. Nor, immensely as I admire Mr. Roger Quilter's work, have I ever been able to enjoy his setting of *O Mistress Mine*. The best singing record from Columbia was of Stralio in *Bel raggio* from Rossini's *Semiramide* and Elizabeth's greeting from *Tannhäuser*, particularly in the *coloratura* song. But her record of *Because* and *Sometimes in my dreams* is beneath contempt, judged whether as singing or as songs. There is a superb record of Stracciari in two arias from *La Tosca* and *La Wally*; but the record from Zaza shows a marked vibrato which I am going—rashly perhaps—to attribute to the recording. A great singer! Arthur Jordan is not a great singer, but he has a pleasing tenor and his choice of songs is almost always excellent. I should like to think that his independence of the degraded ballads in which most of our tenors wallow like pink sugar pigs was being supported by the gramophone public. To those who have not sampled him I commend 3564.

Brunswick records can usually be relied upon to provide some good songs every quarter. This time I recommend Claire Dux in a couple of Mozart arias. I do not care so much for her in Strauss' *Ständchen*. There is a fine record too of Elizabeth Rethberg, who sings *Mi chiamano Mimi* as well as anybody I have heard on the gramophone, and the extract from *Andrea Chénier* on the other side is beautifully given and not so hackneyed.

The Parlophone record of the *Meistersinger Quintet* must be written off as a failure. It is a pity because on the other side is a fine performance of the *Liebestod* from *Tristan* by Melany Kurt. Don't fail to secure Zinaida Jurjevskaja's record of *Pamina's aria* from the *Magic Flute* and a lovely aria from Gluck's *Iphigenie*, because she has such a difficult name to say or to write. I fancy that by this time most of our readers will have made the acquaintance of the quite enchanting records of the Irmeler Madrigal Ladies Choir. The Parlophone Company have issued four up to date; but to anybody who has not, I feel inclined to recommend E.10269 as likely to have the most general

appeal. But really it is almost impossible to choose, and I only hope we shall have many more of these quite exceptionally lovely discs.

The Vocalion Company are re-issuing at a cheaper price some of Rosing's dramatic Russian songs. It really is extraordinary what he does with what is scarcely even a third-rate voice. I was reading somewhere the other day a discussion whether a singer should have a dramatic sense or not. To my mind you might as well ask if a dancer should have feet. At the same time the drama must not be allowed to obtrude itself too much. Rosing makes this mistake, so does Norman Allin. Perhaps the reason is that neither of them has a good enough voice to carry off stagey effects. It takes a Chaliapine or a McCormack to unite perfectly music and drama. Mr. Roy Henderson should beware of being over-dramatic; he really shows very great promise of becoming a top-notch baritone, but he has a tremendous lot to learn. I suspect him of being conceited and thinking he is really better than he is yet. His voice is still rough and he gets most of his light and shade by acting rather than singing. Still, a young man who can give *The Erl King* as well as he does in spite of a lamentable piece of bad taste at the end may go very far, and I have taken this trouble to be rude to him at some length because I believe there is something worth being rude about. The other Vocalion singer, Mr. Frank Titterton, is as good as ever, and I often wonder what it is that prevents his being a great tenor. Malcolm MacEachern is to my mind the best English bass on the gramophone, but I wish he would let himself be advised what to sing by somebody who knows what good songs are. He gives us a great deal too many mediocre songs. I prefer real trash. I suggested long ago that he should turn his attention to *Songs of the North*, and *Maclean of Ardgour* would suit him splendidly. If some of these singers would take my advice occasionally they would find that their pockets benefited. One of the troubles of the gramophone world is the exasperating obstinacy, vanity and ignorance of the "artistes." It is, too, the curse of the operatic stage.

Among the Aco issues I was particularly struck by Miss Thea Phillips' rendering of *Early one Morning* and *I heard you singing*, a charming, true, and unaffected voice. I hope she will give us some good songs; it is a delusion to suppose that people who can only afford half-a-crown for a record wish to hear about nothing but sunbonnets and the sickly religious erotics to which English tenors are prone.

Of the lighter music this quarter Marek Weber is as good as ever, Edith Lorand perhaps not quite so good. I hope that most of you have the Marek Weber habit; his records always remind me of

a good, long, cooling drink. I must have three or four albums full of them, and their standard of excellence is really astonishing both in the choice of the music and the way it is played. It is much the most individual light music on the gramophone. De Groot has his moments, but he is not a patch on Marek Weber and occasionally he commits atrocious solecisms; his religious record last month is one of them. I think that the only rival to Parlophone light music of this kind may come from Columbia, who with the Geiger Orchestra and Jean Lensen have given us some capital records this quarter. Of the American singers the Columbia stars, Layton and Johnstone, easily hold their own. I would like some more of Isabella Patricola from Vocalion. Eileen Stanley of H.M.V. comes nowhere near her. I suppose Cyril Newton must have many admirers as he appears both in Columbia and H.M.V. lists this quarter, but I confess I don't understand why. His singing of *Me and the Boy Friend* after Patricola's matchless performance is more than silly. There is an admirable record of Miss Ella Shields in the Columbia list, a perfect example of restrained comedy. Cyril Newton butts into this song too.

All the band records this quarter struck me as good, but the real interest is to be found amongst the dance records. To the first reader north of the Trent who spots the four records amongst the dances in the Columbia and H.M.V. June bulletins which have a genuine significance I will send an autographed copy of "Gramophone Nights." I say north of the Trent, because the tests were held in London.

I must apologize once more for the inadequacy of my quarterly review, and I daresay I have been unjust to various records, for I have been working ten hours a day at a book for the last six weeks and am tired. In future I shall aim at a monthly survey which will I think be fairer all round. I shall get on with my autobiography as soon as I have time to sit down and think quietly about it, and there is one feature which I feel I must start as early as possible owing to the number of requests I have had, and that is, gradually to go through my collection and pick out from it records which are of exceptional merit, and at the same time to indicate so far as is practicable a recommended version when there are alternative versions. Next month I shall begin with the Beethoven symphonies, but before I get really going on this work I shall have to re-arrange my collection and that must wait till my new library is finished building, which probably won't be till late in the autumn. Meanwhile, I am very anxious to get that list of the best twenty-five records of really good music which is likely to appeal to the medium-brow. Mr. George Blake, the Editor of *John o' London*, has very

generously offered two guineas to the reader who is second, and I propose to extend the time limit for another month.* I do hope that everybody who can spare the time will take a bit of trouble about this competition, for these lists will be of the very greatest service, both to me personally and to all musicians. If a thousand of our readers enter I will have a special pamphlet printed of every record mentioned, and issue it as a supplement to the paper. In the November number I hope to publish a report on my "happy combination" about which some of us are arguing, but coming back to which from the tests I find better than ever.

The London Editor informs me that several people have been complaining to Messrs. Chappell that on my recommendation they have been using Trumpeter needles and spoilt their records. To this Messrs. Chappell replied that they never recommend their Trumpeter needles for anything except dancing. Personally I think this wear of records is greatly exaggerated, and why a needle which is "for concerts and dances" should ruin records in a drawing-room I fail to understand. The Trumpeter is supposed to play two sides of a 12in. record, and among all the hundreds I have been using for the last three months I have found no more than two that failed to last. I believe that Messrs. Chappell stake their reputation on the Clifphone Arrow, and I have no doubt whatever that the Clifphone Arrow is a splendid needle, but when I want that quality of tone I use a Petmecky myself. I want to know in what way the Trumpeter needle ruins a record. How does it do it, where does it do it, and when does it do it? It is bad alignment that ruins records far more than needles. There is only one machine that I know of with perfect alignment, and that is Mr. Balmain's. At the same time Mr. Wilson's protractor has already effected the nearest approach to perfect alignment on several ordinary commercial machines. I invite any reader who questions my remarks about the wear of needles to visit the Vocalion Company and look at the record of the Schumann *Quintet*, which has been experimented on with every needle one can imagine and played steadily for three years.

Finally I wish to express my deep gratitude to Mr. Vitz, who has just sent me a sound-box, which I can positively assert is better for the orchestra than my H.M.V. No. 2, and that means to say that it is the best sound-box I have ever had. He must have taken a great deal of trouble to achieve this result, and I hope it will be a satisfaction for him to feel that his trouble has not been wasted.

The Caxton Hall Tests.

I think that on July 9th, in the Central Hall, Westminster, the person who was most astonished at the success of the first Gramophone Congress was myself. I had hoped in the course of the day we should get about 500 enthusiasts, but actually we had more like 2,000. As I had nothing whatever to do personally with achieving this remarkable result, I think I am at liberty to acclaim it. Everybody in the London office from the London Editor to the office boy worked like slaves. We all owe them our grateful thanks! They on their side are not less grateful to the sporting spirit of the exhibitors and to the energy of the gramophone public. As for our concert in the evening at the tests, I wonder if anywhere in London a better concert could have been heard. To Miss Marie Novello and Miss Helen Henschel, and to Mr. John Goss and the Music Society String Quartet, our warmest congratulations and thanks; I fancy that the artists themselves would admit that they have seldom performed to a more discriminating and appreciative audience. Next year I should like to make the Congress a three-day affair and hold it in Glasgow. Is Glasgow, like Barkis, willing? I suggest that the Glasgow Gramophone Society give us its views on the matter. There is no particular reason why the Congress should wait until next summer, but we must know fairly soon when it is to be, so that I may scheme out a programme.

With regard to the letter from Mr. Creese, which is dealt with elsewhere, I do not imagine that either the competitors, the audience, or ourselves are inclined to attach an undue importance to the tests. For one thing nobody is likely to buy a gramophone to use it in surroundings like those at Caxton Hall. At the same time, these tests have done a great deal to reassure the public about the *bona fides* of the claims put forward by the various gramophones, and they have been evidence of a spirit of co-operation which is very rare indeed in the art or commerce of to-day. I am still under the impression that the instruments should be concealed. The wild allegations of packing the hall made by Mr. Creese are so utterly devoid of foundation, that I am not going to publish the name of the instrument which Mr. Creese in his card considered better than all the others put together, because I do not for a moment believe that the designer of that excellent instrument would have approved of such a method of praising his wares. With regard to Mr. Creese's voting-card, which I have examined closely, I venture to say *qui s'excuse s'accuse*.

I cannot congratulate the competitors on their choice of records with the exception of the Orchorsol which showed cleverness in picking the Parlophone record of the Marek Weber trio (organ, harp and violin in Handel's *Largo*) and Caruso in Massenet's

* For details see page 136.

Elegie with violin obbligato by Mischa Elman. What induced Mr. Craies to handicap his excellent Apollo with a cornet solo of the *Miserere*? And why did the Dousona throw away so much of the advantage it gained with Fleta's *Te quiero* by choosing a band for their second record? Why did Mr. Cotton select that very tinny piano record and, why, if he wanted a soprano did he fix on Toti dal Monte's dull *Carneval de Venise* to show off Repeating Gramophones? Last year the competitors grumbled at my choice of records, so this year I let their blood be upon their own heads with the exception of insisting on the *Uranus* record from *The Planets*. The interesting thing is that every single instrument entered showed up well in this, and I only wish we could have had time to play the searching second side. Another handicap that competitors imposed upon themselves was by occasionally choosing medium needles. The Duophone with its pure tone handicapped itself badly in this respect. The demonstrator should have used the loudest needles he could have secured for an instrument like the Duophone, which will stand them. The Balmain instrument was handicapped by being on one side of the platform on account of the time it takes to get its levels absolutely accurate. However, I shall have a great deal more to say about that instrument in the autumn. We have received a challenge from another private instrument, the Rayflex, designed by Mr. Rowell, for a match between it and the Balmain. This may give us some fun in the autumn. The Vocarola, which, in spite of its size is essentially a drawing-room instrument, made a much better showing than last year, though, of course, its price gave it no opportunity of occupying a high position. My own opinion is that both the E.M.G. and the Apollo were handicapped by the sound-boxes they used. The Luxus is essentially a compromise, and I almost think that if you are going to have a romantic and mellow sound-box you had better go the whole hog by choosing one like the Astra. The E.M.G. supplies two sound-boxes with every instrument, and I am sorry that we did not have an opportunity of hearing the "brilliant" sound-box in preference to the Luxus. I found when I came up to town that Mr. Balmain had been seduced by the Luxus, another distinguished supporter of which is our contributor, Mr. Davis of Liverpool. I dissuaded Mr. Balmain from using the Luxus at the tests, and he was using an Exhibition No. 2, but unfortunately not a particularly good No. 2. I had the personal satisfaction, when I played my own Balmain on my return to Jethou, of hearing it give quite five times as good a performance as Mr. Balmain got out of his, either at the office or in the hall. The Pixie Grippa covered itself with glory, and many of the audience went out of their way to write a special word of praise for it. The

Fullotone had strong support, as did the Apollo. I have an Apollo with me at present to be tested at Jethou, but I think its sound-box is wrong and doesn't do justice to the ingenuity of the instrument itself. But I will reserve any remarks about this until I discuss my happy combination in the autumn.

I think few people who were present will not agree with me that the Orchorsol's victory was a genuine one, and it is a remarkable tribute to the combination of a small brilliant sound-box with a wooden tone-arm. My own feeling is that if the E.M.G. had used its brilliant sound-box for the *Uranus* record it would probably have led in the second test. I propose to add to the medals a special commendation for its performance in the *Uranus* record and also a special commendation to the Pixie Grippa. Finally, I must congratulate the Dousona on its splendid debut, and express a desire to hear more of the Duophone under different conditions.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.



National Gramophonic Society

The special attention of readers is drawn to an arrangement by which they may join the Society now and pay by easy instalments for the records of the current year, which ends on September 29th. An initial payment of £1 17s. 6d. covers the annual subscription and the immediate despatch of the first batch of six records, the Beethoven *Harp Quartet in E flat*, Op. 74, and the Debussy *Quartet in G minor*, Op. 10. Full particulars may be obtained on application (with a stamped and addressed envelope) to the Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1.

There is no reason why every reader of THE GRAMOPHONE should not have the benefit of these splendid records, except that the roll of membership will be closed when there are 1,000 members. By the courtesy of Messrs. Broadwood and Sons, the N.G.S. records may be heard and members may be enrolled at their Galleries at 158, New Bond Street, W. 1. As the Editor explained at the meeting of the Society at the Central Hall, Westminster, on July 9th, the records already issued of Beethoven, Debussy, Schubert, and Schönberg are convincing proof of the good work which can be done with very limited resources; but when the roll of membership is full a still more ambitious programme can be undertaken next year.

It is hoped to distribute the third batch of records to members before the end of this month. This includes the Beethoven *First Rasoumorsky* and the Mozart *Oboe Quartet* previously announced.

THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

Record Singers at Covent Garden

ON the whole, I fear, they were rather a disappointing lot, for singers of "international" repute. Quite good they were, of course; but not altogether up to the old standard. That is the worst of the present-day system of "booming" new-comers and lauding them to the skies in the most exaggerated language. It makes you expect too much. All the inflated nonsense that the press agents get into the newspapers constitutes a bad preparation for sensible criticism, because it leaves the ordinary person in bewildering doubt as to which of the two is likely to be true and correct. Speaking for myself, I may be *désillusionné*, but I am far from being *blasé*. I still retain my precious faculty for admiring and enjoying the beautiful in art, even with a lifetime of glorious memories and rare musical experiences behind me. I can still appreciate the singing of a first-rate artist without the kind of rejuvenating aid that Mephistopheles accorded Faust—in his case for a consideration. (True, Faust was not a musical critic, nor even until he somehow became engaged in opera, a regular student and professor of the vocal art, being merely, as we know, a philosopher tired of life.) No one, as a matter of fact, could have been readier than the present writer to be delighted by the celebrities who appeared at Covent Garden in June and July.

Experience has now proved that it is the exception rather than the rule for singers to live up to their gramophone reputations. In other words, their records are generally several degrees nearer perfection—by which I mean what is *their* very best—than their *viva-voce* achievements before a public audience. It was so in the case of Galli-Curci; it is so in the case of Toti dal Monte. In both there can be no question to my thinking that the gramophone listener gets the best of it. In the recording-room the influence of nerves may be almost, if not quite, left out of calculation; and there, again, imperfections can be removed by the simple process of repeating the piece as often as may be necessary until the best result is attained. Galli-Curci has not been heard here on the stage, but she probably would not come much nearer to doing herself justice at Covent Garden than at the Albert Hall. Toti dal Monte is slightly more self-possessed before an audience than her famous rival, and she is also far more deliberate. She did better at the Albert Hall, in the opinion of many good judges,

than she did at the Opera. She was also infinitely to be preferred in the comedy of *Il Barbiere* to the sentimental tragedy of *Lucia*. But her technique, as I said last month, is quite wonderful; it is only the quality of some of her head notes and the accuracy of her chromatic scale that are open to criticism—apart from that irritating pause which precedes every cadenza, as much as to say, "Now listen; you are about to hear something marvellous!"

With Maria Jeritza it is the other way about. She is heard to much greater advantage in the opera house than on the gramophone; and in any case, notwithstanding the warmth and richness of her voice, it is her fascinating personality and her clever acting that interest you more than her singing. Exaggeration apart, her striking impersonation of the Tosca will dwell in one's memory long after her rendering of Puccini's music has faded into oblivion. Herein, therefore, one suffered only a partial disappointment. In *Fedora* the balance was about even. The 10in. disc of two excerpts from this opera recently given out by the H.M.V. (D.A.579) supplies a wholly truthful reflection of Jeritza's voice and style, and they make of the music about all that there is to be made of it. *Son gente risoluta* is a trifle too strident, especially on the "e" sounds; but as regards animation and emphasis the rendering is just right. The *Dio di Giustizia* on the reverse side is the shorter but more interesting of the two. The plaintive tones come in with welcome sweetness after a charming orchestral introduction, and the snatches of melody are touchingly phrased.

Come we now to Elisabeth Rethberg. I found her voice in *Aida* exactly as I described it in the June number of THE GRAMOPHONE after hearing her *Mamma morta* (Bruns. 50054A) from *Andrea Chénier*. It is a lovely organ, skilfully managed, only rarely hardened by over-pressure; and her singing is marked by exemplary steadiness of tone as well as purity of style. But it was not the right voice for *Aida*. It sounded too light, too thin in volume, lacking in the richness and power that had satisfied me in the gramophone record; in short, no more impressive to the ear than I found her infelicitous "make-up" as Amonasro's daughter to the eye. The Southern warmth of her slightly ochreous complexion was not adequately reflected

either in her singing or her acting—the latter more restless, more suggestive of the aspen leaf in human shape, than I care to see in the most apprehensive of Aïdas. Now, unluckily, I could not see Elisabeth Rethberg as *Madam Butterfly*, which rôle must unquestionably suit her much better. But her performance in Verdi's opera added one more proof to my growing conviction that the gramophone record, however perfect and pleasure-giving in itself, must not always be regarded as a reliable indication of the effect that the singer will produce either in the piece or the part inside an opera house. I must say, however, that Rethberg's *Aida* gained immensely, vocally speaking, by comparison with such a consistently noisy, strident Amneris as Georgette Caro, and also with that more justifiably stentorian baritone, Benvenuto Franci, who does not often seem to remember the meaning in his own language of the words *piano*, *mezza voce*, or even *messa di voce*. Finally, for a great conductor, Leopoldo Mugnone might have kept his orchestra down much more.

Elisabeth Rethberg's *Ritorna vincitor* was one of the best things she did in the opera—smooth, full of contrast, well phrased, dramatic in conception and feeling. She was thinking then of her singing, not wasting effort on starts and shivers and physical contortions. I do not remember to have heard her record of that piece (assuming that she has made one); but what I have heard and enjoyed quite as much is her rendering of Schubert's *Serenade* (Brunswick 15069A.), sung in the original German, with an orchestral substitute for the original piano accompaniment. This is a wholly delightful interpretation of the familiar *Lied*, clear, appealing, fairly steady in tone and faultless in intonation. The Dresden soprano is scarcely so satisfying in *Solveig's Song*, which occupies the reverse side of this record, because she takes it too slowly and thus limits herself to one verse only. Besides, her medium register is not invariably so sympathetic as usual, owing to excessive breath-pressure. But the quality of the *mezza voce* is lovely, and her tone in the refrain exquisitely musical.

Whilst on the subject of records by the Covent Garden stars, I may as well complete my brief survey with a word about two by Toti dal Monte and Jeritza. The former's *Deh vieni non tardar* (H.M.V., D.B.831) is given minus the recitative, and with a cheerful Italian disregard for the *appoggiature*. One looks in vain here for the true Mozart style, for the immaculate purity of phrasing and avoidance of mere effects which that style entails. Yet on the whole the immortal melody is neatly and agreeably sung; it has considerable vocal charm, and the admirable *sostenuto* that Toti dal Monte owes to her correct breathing. Nevertheless, I am quite sure that her delivery of this air at the Albert Hall concert was in a purely artistic sense superior to her record of it. On the other

hand, Maria Jeritza's *Vissi d'Arte* (H.M.V., D.A.565) is as unquestionably a better vocal achievement here than the realistic reading which she gives whilst gracefully but anxiously reclining upon the floor of Scarpia's apartment. It may not be free from harsh tone on the more acute vowel sounds (a common fault with the German singers), but it is sustained with a finer *cantilena* and a more convincing sense of Tosca's right to complain of the poor reward she gets for all her good deeds. On the reverse of the same disc is the Austrian soprano's very careful but not particularly "atmospheric" rendering of the romanza *Voi lo sapete*, from *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

Having already dealt in my June article with the principal records of *Andrea Chénier*, there remains only to say a few words about the Covent Garden performance. It did not disappoint me because I knew the opera well enough not to expect great things. It was all very picturesque, lurid, and revolutionary, and so forth; but, all said and done, how little of it got over the footlights—or past the noisy orchestra—that filled the soul with joy or imagination! I was certainly not troubled by direct comparisons of any sort. The only one I found myself making was between the juvenile Margaret Sheridan of six years ago—the pretty little promising Irish Iris of Mascagni's opera—and the more mature—the almost portly—Maddalena of this ugly tragedy of '89. But even that comparison was very faint; for I failed to recognise the one in the other, and speedily forgot that I had gazed upon an earlier figure or heard an earlier voice. If Miss Sheridan is to be regarded as a specimen of the Italianised British soprano of one's dreams, then I can only say that some people's taste in these matters must be extremely curious. It is always a pity when expectations are raised above the normal, and in this respect Miss Sheridan's case is one that calls rather for sympathy than blame. But she has in reality a pleasing, musical voice, and if she will refrain from forcing or from the further cultivation of a *vibrato*, she has still every chance of becoming an excellent artist. I have no intention of going through the cast of *Andrea Chénier* seriatim. The new tenor, Giacomo Lauri-Volpi, has a voice of great resonance and power, capable of some variety of colour and depth of expression; and, save that he now and then lost his hold on the pitch, his singing left few loopholes for criticism. Moreover, he maintained control in his louder outbursts, which was more than could always be said of Benvenuto Franci—otherwise a fine baritone and a capable artist—in his dramatic portrayal of the vacillating flunkey-revolutionist, Gérard. As in *Aida*, the ensemble of orchestra and stage showed the talent of the veteran Leopoldo Mugnone in a more favourable light than that of the new-comers who had preceded him in the con-

ductor's seat. The young conductors at La Scala are not all up to the level of Toscanini, though they go forth equipped with credentials from him.

There was much that was interesting, and not a little that was instructive in the manifesto issued towards the close of the season by Lt.-Col. Eustace Blois, the managing director of the London Opera Syndicate. It was something of a surprise to learn that, in spite of the improvement on 1924, the eight weeks' season had resulted in a "steady substantial loss." Perhaps it would have been wiser to deny at once, instead of leaving uncontradicted, the periodical announcements that the house had been sold out in advance and that no seats for the cheaper parts were obtainable for days beforehand. The promise to publish in due course a summary of the actual financial results was extremely welcome, as being likely to shed a useful light upon future possibilities. But what sensible person does expect "grand opera" to be self-supporting in this or any other country? As regards the repertoire chosen for the Italian representations, I do not quite agree that the best was done that was possible in the circumstances, even allowing that first thought had to be given to the requirements of the artists engaged. We could have done perfectly well without Strauss's *Elektra*; we could have done with less Giordano, or even with none at all; and no one was exactly dying to hear *Lucia* again or any other of the old prima donna operas, unless there was time to rehearse them adequately and mount them to perfection. And if the old school was to enjoy a revival where, oh where was Meyerbeer? Only that is another story, and one in which I shall have something to say, I hope, ere very long.

The complaint that too much criticism has been directed at the *mise en scène* commands my entire sympathy. Everyone knows that Covent Garden is years behind the times in this department. It possesses neither the resources nor the inventive genius of Vienna, Berlin, Prague, or half a score other Continental opera houses in capitals that are not supposed to own a hundredth part of London's wealth. It is scarcely reasonable to expect a modest Syndicate coming into Covent Garden for barely two months in the year, to accomplish things which require an enormous systematic outlay, and must either be provided for by the State in support of a national institution or be justified by big advance subscriptions for virtually the whole of the private boxes and stalls that the house contains. It is precisely this last guarantee that Lt.-Col. Blois tells us his Syndicate means to make sure of before next December, prior to determining its plans for another season in 1926, with a better programme that shall suit the artists to the operas and not the operas to the artists. I wish him all success in his creditable effort.

P.S.—Among operatic records recently issued by H.M.V. I would assign a high place to those of Dinh Gilly. They are out of the common as to choice, artistic in execution, and up to the loftiest mark as examples of up-to-date recording. Two bits of Puccini (D.A.559) represent the lamented *maestro* in his earliest and latest manners—viz., *Scorri fiume* from *Il Tabarro* and *Vecchia zimarra* from *La Bohème*—and both are excellently sung. The *Légende de la Sauge* from Massenet's *Jongleur de Notre Dame* (D.B.693) comes out well because of its refinement and grace, just as the deeper note of tragedy permeates the big air *Il est venu*, from that extraordinarily bizarre opera, *La Coupe du Roi de Thule*, by Eugène Diaz (D.A.558), which has been justly forgotten since its production at the Paris Opéra in 1873. More welcome than these things will be the duets from *Butterfly*, sung by Dinh Gilly with Joseph Hislop, and which fill two sides of one disc (D.B.743) under the respective titles of *Amore o grillo* and *Dovunque al mondo*. Both artists are heard to the greatest advantage. I wish I could say as much for Mr. Murray Davey's delivery of *Pogner's Address* from *Die Meistersinger* (Voc. A.0234), but unfortunately I find it dull and monotonous in the extreme.

HERMAN KLEIN.



National Gramophonic Society

OBJECT OF THE SOCIETY:—To aim at achieving for gramophone music what such societies as the Medici have done for the reproduction of the printed book.

COST OF MEMBERSHIP:—5s. a year subscription. £3 5s. half-yearly (on March 24th and September 29th) for records, packing and (inland) postage. Twenty-four twelve-inch double-sided records will be issued every year (i.e., they cost 5s. each, with 10s. a year for packing and postage. Members abroad or in the Dominions have a separate account for postage).

The Society is limited to 1,000 members.

The current year began on September 29th, 1924. New members will receive the Debussy and Beethoven quartets, the Schubert Trio and Schönberg Sextet, already issued, until the edition is exhausted (Debussy's Quartet in G minor, Op. 10, and Beethoven's Quartet in E flat, Op. 74—six records played by the Spencer Dyke String Quartet. Schubert's Piano Trio in E flat, Op. 100, played by Spencer Dyke, B. Patterson Parker, and Harold Craxton, and Schönberg's String Sextet, "Verklärte Nacht," played by the Spencer Dyke Quartet, with James Lockyer and E. J. Robinson, eight records; total, fourteen records).

As far as is practicable, members will be allowed to buy extra sets or extra single records at 5s. each and postage; but in no circumstances may they sell a N.G.S. record to a non-member for less than 7s. 6d.

A list of works suggested for recording by the Society is issued to members, and the Advisory Committee, which consists of the Editor, the London Editor, Messrs. W. R. Anderson, W. W. Cobbett, Spencer Dyke, and Alec Robertson, is largely influenced in framing the programme for the future by the opinions on this list expressed by members. It must be clearly understood, however, that the Society does not intend to duplicate any works published or in course of preparation by any of the Recording Companies, and that the Advisory Committee uses such information as it can acquire in order to avoid this duplication.

All works are recorded complete. They should be played at the rate of 80 revolutions a minute.

THE HONOURS OF JULY 9th

JUDGING by some of the comments upon the Gramophone Congress and the Gramophone Tests of Thursday, July 9th, which have reached us from readers and from exhibitors, we have good reason to be proud of the success of both enterprises; and, judging by our own sentiments, we must add to that pride a certain spice of relief. It was not till we saw the steady stream of visitors circulating round the Central Hall that we knew that we were not involved in a fiasco; and it was not till we saw the Caxton Hall filled in the evening with an audience obviously enjoying itself that we could prophesy success for the tests. We had established—with the help of our readers and of the trade—a real landmark in gramophone history.

The Congress

It is just as well to show how easily the Congress might have been a failure. The trade had two obvious objections to it—it was a one-day show and therefore very costly; and it was arranged to take place at the very worst possible time in the year. These objections actually prevented two or three makers from exhibiting their machines, and though it would thus be unfair to accuse them of anything worse than the common sense which Sir Richard Terry, in his opening address, declared to be the mark of the unprogressive mind, we may be forgiven for expressing a hope that they have already regretted their faint-heartedness, and that our readers will back us up by adopting the maxim that those members of the trade who support THE GRAMOPHONE are alone worthy of their support.

The response of those who had a sporting faith in our ability as well as in our good intentions was remarkable; and readers who were not able to be present at the Congress will see from the following notes that it was really representative of the whole trade. There was plenty to see, and more than enough for mortal ears to hear, throughout the day.

Luckily for us the second obstacle to success was also easily surmounted. When the *Daily Telegraph* referred to the forthcoming Congress as a gigantic enterprise, beside which the Steinway Hall tests of the previous year would seem a little thing, we wilted with dismay. We had visions of a thin dribble of depressed readers gazing at half a dozen meagre stalls huddled in the vastness of the Central Hall at Westminster. But we braced ourselves, we braced our faith—and in the event the response of the public was as great as that of the trade.

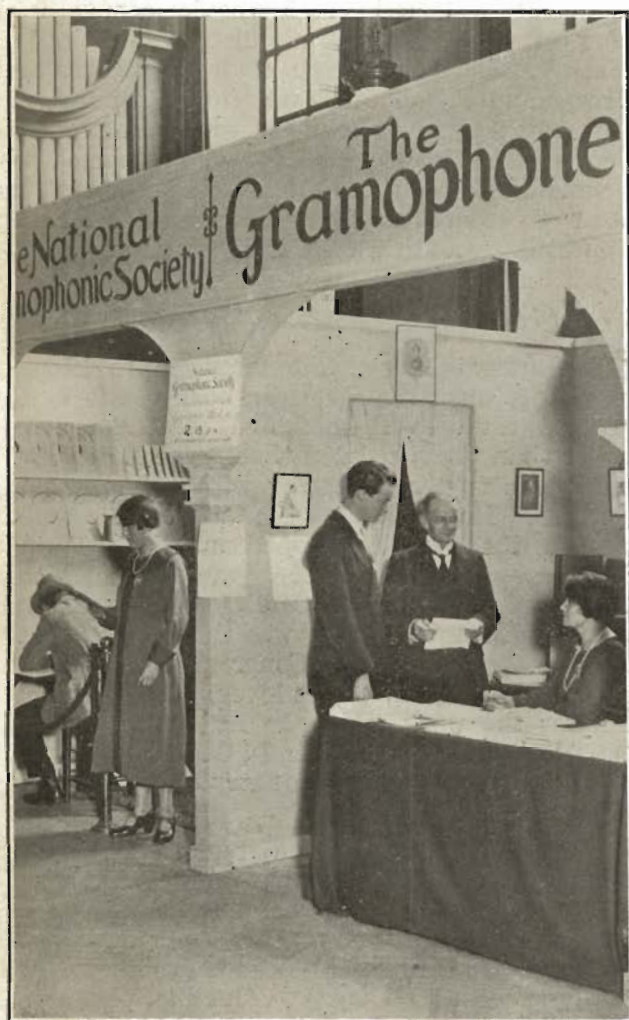
Between 1,500 and 2,000 people came to the Congress. Some came from a distance—one at least from South Africa; others from Wales, from Liverpool, Birmingham, even from Scotland—and most of them stayed a good while, and many of them enabled us to clothe familiar names with personalities. The title Congress was not inapt, and to all those who answered our appeal for their support last month we are truly grateful.

The Opening

Sir Richard Terry, who managed to keep his promise to open the Congress, although he had to catch a train to Birmingham at 11.30, arrived earlier than the scheduled time. The Editor introduced him to the gathering with a few words of welcome. He emphasised the fact that Sir Richard is one of the few distinguished musicians who have shown appreciation of the gramophone without committing themselves to adulation of one particular kind of gramophone. He was therefore well fitted to act as President of the Congress in this inaugural year, and all gramophone-lovers were grateful to him for the work which he had done both with the Westminster Cathedral Choir and in the popularising all over the country of sea shanties.

The word "shanty" gave Sir Richard a cue that was like the kick of a mule, and before he had got through three sentences of the address which he was intending to make to us he was off at a gallop into the history of the sea shanty—which he begged us always to pronounce like "shall" to rhyme with "scanty." (Columbia, please note.) He sketched a memory of sailing ships passed into history and of steam ships now passing into the same phase. He drew our attention to the rapidity of invention, mentioning the intensive progress of air plane design in one year of warfare; and this brought him to the subject of the gramophone and of the way in which it had escaped the notice of the musical world in its development from the atrocious stridency of its early days to its present state of grace. He was there, said Sir Richard, in the white robe of the penitent, to apologise for the hostility or the indifference which for years the musical profession had shown towards a wonderful piece of musical mechanism. The accusation that the gramophone was mechanical and soulless was absurd. What was the piano or the fiddle—or, for that matter, the oboe—but an instrument for producing sound? The difference between one musical instrument and another was not one of principle but one of degree, and, that

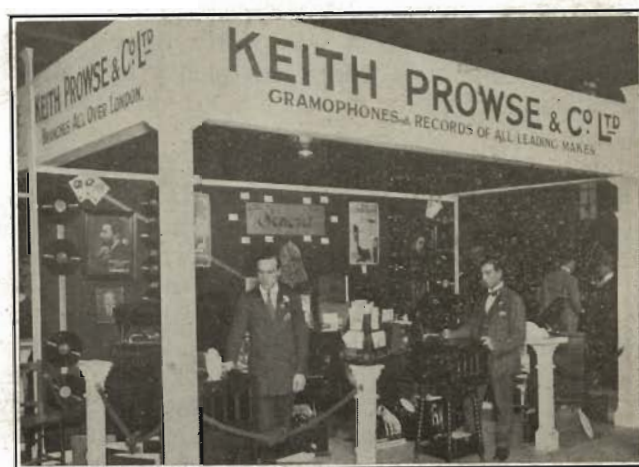
SOME PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE CONGRESS



OUR STALLS.



THE EDITOR.





being so, it was only a question of time when the gramophone would be universally recognised as a source of purest joy. As for soullessness, it was surely better to hear an organ masterpiece produced on the gramophone than by a second-rate local organist. He congratulated the promoters of the Congress on their enterprise and on the attractive exhibition that they had organised.

The Congress was thus well launched, and when the speeches were over the hubbub broke out from all directions, and half a dozen divas blended their voices from distant stalls in passionless combat. The only escape for the visitor was into the Conference Hall, where, all through the day, demonstrations were being given by exhibitors of their gramophones or records in comparative quiet.

The Exhibitors

Let us take a brief survey of the stalls for the benefit of readers who were not present. At the top end of the Central Hall were our own two stands, one for THE GRAMOPHONE, the other for the National Gramophonic Society; each fronted by an archway in yellow and black in imitation of the outside cover of the paper. Here we sold copies of THE GRAMOPHONE, back numbers, "Gramophone Nights," "Gramophone Tips," Wilson Protractors; we enrolled new members for the N.G.S., received subscriptions to the De Lara Opera Fund, and sold the new N.G.S. record envelopes. Our stalls were a rendezvous for old and new friends all through the day. Opposite were Messrs. Keith Prowse & Co., who were showing models of H.M.V., Columbia, Sonora, and Decca machines, besides all the usual accessories; and at this juncture let us say that the elegance of the stalls, in dark blue and white, and of the sign-writing on them, were a great credit to Messrs. T. Preedy & Sons, the contractors, who made the exhibition as pleasant to the eye and as convenient in design both to seller and purchaser as any that we have ever seen. Neither the general lay out nor the detail could have been bettered.

The Gramophone Exchange had a stall facing the stage, and did a big business in the multifarious needles, albums, sound boxes, records, etc., which have made the Exchange so familiar to readers all over the world; and there, too, was the majestic Vocarola, attracting a great deal of attention. Mr. Russell and Mr. Walters had a busy day, for the public was full of curiosity and information—and apparently of infinite leisure.

Next door the Orchorsol models were shown, from the 50-guinea model down to the new £10 model—this last straining at the leash for the evening tests which were destined to establish its excellence. Brushes for cleaning records and polish

for cleaning cabinets were also shown and much in demand.

At the Vocalion stand round the corner the chief feature was the Buddha models in lacquer which are bound to find their way into many drawing rooms and boudoirs and halls. Vocalion records were there too, of course; and framed on the wall was the original record of the first movement of the Schumann quintet, with an autograph inscription by the Editor. (The record of the second movement was on THE GRAMOPHONE stall.)

The Parlophone Company naturally displayed most prominently the wonderful series of Beethoven Symphonies; but there were many, many other records which claimed new and old friends among the passing crowd. We can only hope that many of the visitors realised—perhaps for the first time—how wide and remarkable is the range of the Parlophone catalogue.

Messrs. Alfred Imhof concentrated attention upon Polydor records throughout the day, though an H.M.V. record cabinet and a Globe-Wernicke cabinet were additional attractions, which invited comparisons with the Sesame and Jussrite cabinets on other stands. A neatly-arranged stand this, and worthy of the reputation of a firm which has won many window-display competitions.

In the other block of stands the E.M.G. faced the entrance to the Hall and seemed to waylay everyone who came near it. These beautiful models had the distinction of being only sold retail, which may account for some of their popularity with amateurs; and the E.M.G. scored notably in the demonstrations which were given in the Conference Hall. Mr. Ginn, the only begetter of them, was much in evidence.

Messrs. Goodwin & Tabb had a fine display of miniature scores on their stall, and gave special prominence to those which concern the productions of the National Gramophonic Society. This was the only stall which did not deal with goods exclusively gramophonic; but "G. and T." are by this time as important a part of the gramophile's outfit as record albums.

Peter Pans—or is it Peter Panta?—occupied the adjoining stall, and flowered in an instant from little oblong black buds into full-grown gramophones with 12-inch records held aloft and voices of remarkable virility. Peter Pan is a neighbour of ours in Frith Street, and not only the smallest but one of the busiest neighbours imaginable. A Peter Pan was the first gramophone sold at the Congress.

Next came Messrs. Craies & Stavridi with a large range of Apollo models. The moderate prices and good workmanship of these models roused considerable interest, especially as a good many of the public had never seen them before,

and only knew them by name from the advertisement pages of THE GRAMOPHONE.

Incidentally one may point to this obvious advantage of the Congress. Many of the best gramophones are as familiar by name to our readers as Epstein's Hudson memorial, and THE GRAMOPHONE contains references every month to needles, sound boxes, record albums and cabinets, which are seldom to be seen in provincial towns or country districts; but here at the Central Hall they were all within sight for the first time—from the Wilson Protractor and the Xylopin needle to Captain Barnett's "Sonatab" and the Balmain machine and the Sesame cabinet.

This last had a stall to itself, and Messrs. Boumphrey Arundel & Co. were showing a variety of models which were far more convincing than any number of "unique working model folders"! Especially noticeable was a double cabinet in old oak—probably the finest piece of craftsmanship in the exhibition—to hold three hundred records. Any competent furniture dealer could have sold it as a genuine Tudor piece—to a not too competent buyer.

The Dousona is a gramophone which is new to us, and, to judge by its appearance and by its subsequent performance at the tests, likely to become a household word in gramophone circles. Several models were shown by Messrs. Grimes and Co., of Croydon, on their stall, and were closely inspected by the pundits, who were inclined to regard the rest of the Congress as a collection of old friends, *crambe repetita*. The Dousona was a novelty and very welcome.

Equally welcome, though not so much of a novelty, was the range of Duophones shown by Messrs. Marshall & Snelgrove in a stall which, like Dan Leno's sentry at the Tower, faced the refreshment room. The Duophone always attracts attention because its double sound-box marks it out as distinct from every other kind of gramophone; and in the tests later on it had the further distinction of being sponsored by Lieut.-Colonel Mackenzie Rogan, C.V.O., most famous of military band conductors.

The further end of the Hall was occupied by the Perophone Co. with a little herd of Pixie Grippas—the Kerry cattle of the gramophone world, dainty, nimble, and full of quality—and by Captain H. T. Barnett, who was showing a variety of machines, sound-boxes, and records of individual interest and history, as well as Jussrite cabinets, the new table model of the Beltona Peridulce, and the Sonatab. Needless to say, a number of his correspondents were anxious to make his personal acquaintance.

If the very few gramophones whose absence was regretted—we can only think of three—had been represented, we could have fairly claimed that the

Congress was a complete survey of the Trade at the present time.

The N.G.S. Meeting

In the afternoon there were two important speeches in the Central Hall and an important meeting of the National Gramophonic Society in the Conference. At the last specimens of the new Beethoven and Mozart records—soon to be issued to members—were heard on a special model of the Balmain machine with a colossal horn, a skeleton gramophone in which it was easy to examine the salient characteristics of Mr. Balmain's design. Although no important decisions were made at this meeting, a scheme was outlined by which members may pay for their records by monthly instead of half-yearly instalments; and this development, details of which will be published in due course, is likely to remove the obstacle which has kept many a reader of THE GRAMOPHONE from the fold of the N.G.S. Mr. Compton Mackenzie, who was supported on the platform by Messrs. W. W. Cobbett, W. A. Anderson, and Alec Robertson, drew a vivid picture of the potentialities of the Society when the roll of a thousand members is full and a consequently firmer financial position makes an expansion of the scheme feasible.

The Federation

Major Bavin, the well-known lecturer of the Federation of British Music Industries, was good enough to come down to the Congress to explain to those present the work and objects of the Federation. He pointed out that the educational department of the Federation was kept in a watertight compartment, altogether separate from the commercial side of the work, and that its activities were guided by a group of musicians whose names carry weight and respect throughout the land. There was nothing philanthropic about this; it was a far-sighted business point of view; the growing knowledge and love of music make a growing demand for it. Since 1921, when the department was started, lectures and demonstrations had been given to over 200,000 people in all parts of the country. It was in these demonstrations, said Major Bavin, that the help of the gramophone had been invaluable, and in the preparation of children in schools for the full enjoyment of those "children's concerts" which were proving so popular. At the end of his interesting address Major Bavin described a scene in an infants' school when at their own suggestion the children had danced to the gramophone record of Bach's *Suite in B minor* for flute and strings. Such unprepared incidents as this proved, he said, the ever widening horizon of the gramophone's influence on the musical taste of the nation.

The Opera Scheme

At 4 p.m. Mr. Isidore de Lara addressed those present on his scheme for an Imperial and Permanent Opera House in London, a scheme which has for many months had the cordial support of THE GRAMOPHONE. He made a most effective speech, and was followed by Mr. Compton Mackenzie, whose plea to the audience that they should subscribe to the de Lara Fund added force to the arguments of Mr. de Lara; and at the end a good few of those present went straight to THE GRAMOPHONE stall and paid in their pounds to become Founders of the Opera House. Their example should be followed by all who read these lines and have not yet subscribed. The money subscribed is held by THE GRAMOPHONE under a guarantee that, if the scheme falls through, it will be returned in full to the givers.

Mr. de Lara had to hurry away to the House of Commons, where he had been invited to address the Labour Members on the same subject, and from all accounts he impressed his audience "in another place" as much as his audience of gramophonists.

* * *

Although the centre of gravity moved across to the Caxton Hall at about 5.30 p.m., the Congress attracted more and more people every hour till it closed at 10 p.m., and there was no slackening, but rather an increase, of interest right up to the end.

Whatever may be said by delighted carpers about the futility of the Gramophone Tests in the Caxton Hall, there was no doubt about the success of the First Gramophone Congress.

The Gramophone Tests

The Caxton Hall is supposed to hold six hundred people, and though it was not quite full at any time during the evening of the 9th, there must have been about four hundred people present on an average throughout the long session from 5.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. Admission was free, and tickets were sent to all our readers who applied for them. It was a splendid opportunity for us to welcome our friends and to give them as pleasant an entertainment as possible, though, to be sure, they had to pay for any light refreshments that they had. By the great, the almost overwhelming, kindness of several artists we were able to give them a concert of an hour and a half such as it would be very hard to equal for charm and musicianship in London, or anywhere else.

In return we asked our guests to help us in the awarding of some medals which we wished to give to three gramophones. We had invited all the gramophone manufacturers—or nearly all—to com-

pete in tests for the discovery of the gramophones which are the best value for money at the moment on the market. Eleven machines were duly entered as candidates, and brought to the Caxton Hall and ranged on the platform. It is true that there were prizes to win. But there were also great risks to be run. One is not surprised that a good many manufacturers did not care to enter for the tests. Probably England is the only country in the world where even eleven machines could be got together in these conditions. We need not explain the matter further—anyone can understand it—but we can record the gratitude with which we honour this sporting spirit among gramophone manufacturers.

We asked our guests to take two voting cards each—one to keep for reference, the other to hand in to us when completed. Being our guests we did not ask them to pay for the printing of these cards. We explained the proposed tests, one in which each machine would play a vocal and an instrumental record (owner's choice), the other in which it would play records of our choosing. We asked our guests to make notes on the performances and to fill in their votes at the end of each test as follows: "I consider that judged solely as value for money the following is the order of the six best machines," with the names; and to sign the card with the voter's name and address. At the foot of the card was the following reminder: "Remember (i.) to fill in your card completely, (ii.) to say where in the Hall you were sitting, (iii.) to put your name and address at the bottom. It is of the utmost importance to the competitors that the voting should be the result of scrupulous unflagging judgment."

When the voting cards were sorted the next day it was found that about a hundred and eighty were complete for one test or for both. This may be regarded as a fair proportion—enough, at any rate, to form the basis for decisions.

* * *

One of our guests wrote to us on July 13th from 75, Felbridge Road, E. Dulwich, S.E. 22, as follows:

THE GRAMOPHONE "TEST" FARCE.

DEAR SIR,—The whole proceedings at the recent so-called "tests" held at the Caxton Hall can only be described as a sheer farce and a travesty of what a real test should be—this is not only my personal opinion, but also that of a wide circle of gramophone enthusiasts who were present, and whom I heard state afterwards that "it would cause a lack of confidence in THE GRAMOPHONE." Judged purely on a value for money basis, what opportunity had the audience of inspecting the cabinet work and judging for themselves whether it was a well-finished job of good sound timber or only a veneered three-ply fake? I noticed one demonstrator, who casually lifted his apparently heavy-looking pedestal machine to the side of the stage, without any effort whatever.

How could one compare an elaborate £50 machine with

a diminutive 50s. portable, yet these machines were all jumbled up irrespective of type or class, whether portable, pedestal, or table grand!

Why were there no tests with various types of needles—especially fibre?

Again, you have been advocating better track alignment, then why no test of this most important detail of accuracy and finish?—How would you compare a cheap machine with bad tracking to an expensive one with good tracking, in regard to the wear and tear on records? So far for "value for money," now with regards to the voting.

There was a total lack of stewardship, and no method of supervision whatever. As the machines could all be seen, what was to prevent a firm from packing the hall with their supporters, who would vote *en bloc* for their machine? At the foot of the swing-doors in the passage was a pile of voting cards to which anyone could help themselves, and by simply filling up different names and addresses, obtain a few more votes for the machine they were interested in—I myself possess a few cards which I obtained from the pile without question. I saw some people tear up their cards, evidently as a silent protest against the whole ridiculous proceedings.

Re the test on the *Planets* record, an award should have been made for the best rendering of this disc, irrespective of the type of machine.

I might mention that there was one machine there which, on every salient point you mentioned, was even superior to Mr. Balmains elaborate apparatus.

Another point I should like to draw your attention to; there should have been no speech-making during the show at the Central Hall.

Traders who rented space there did so to show and sell their goods, not to have a possible purchaser's interest spoilt by somebody or the other's speech, no matter how eminent they happened to be in their particular profession.

Yours truly,

W. J. CREESE.

P.S.—I challenge you to publish this criticism.

In justice to the courtesy of our other guests, let it be said at once that at the time of writing this is the only one who has thought it necessary to explain to us our shortcomings or to insult the competitors and his fellow guests by writing to us in this strain. "What was to prevent a firm from packing the hall . . . ?" "Anyone could . . . by simply filling up different names and addresses, obtain a few more votes for the machine they were interested in."

One marvels at the impudence of the man who actually challenges us to publish his self-condemnation.

Let it not be thought for a moment by those who were present at the Caxton Hall or by our readers who are waiting for a report of the results that in initiating the tests this year or in the actual organisation of them we were blind to the most obvious considerations. The difficulty of forming a fair judgment on machines of all shapes, sizes, and prices, playing all sorts of records in a hall for which many of them may not be adapted, even if the tests were for the best intrinsic performance, would be formidable. To judge on the basis of value for

money is hard. To judge without a proper examination of each machine in detail is still harder. To judge with complete impartiality, although one may not know many of the competing machines even by name but may own one of them and know its advantages with intimacy, is a further complication. But the fact remains that though half of those present may have flinched from recording their votes through a sense of insufficient data, yet a hundred and eighty carried out their perhaps irksome task with thoroughness and did their best to give, on the whole, and on the merits of the evidence available, an honest verdict.

A thing may be inadequate without being farcical or worthless.

To take the next point—why no needle tests? The answer is surely obvious. As it was, the tests took us nearly five hours. Each competitor was allowed to use any needle he wished, just as in the first test he was allowed to choose his own records; and if he chose unwisely he lost marks accordingly. No doubt the art of demonstration influenced the voting to a certain extent.

Needle-track alignment. In the first test competitors were invited to tell the audience anything that they wished about the machines—motors, sound-boxes, cabinet work, suitability for small rooms or large rooms, suitability for steel or fibre etc. None of them made any claim about needle-track alignment, but they could have done so. In this connection Mr. P. Wilson writes: "It is interesting to note that the first three machines in the test results had good track alignment. Their tracking errors at various points of a full 12 inch record were:

	Inside.		Middle.		Outside.
Orchorsol ..	7°	....	zero	....	7°
Dousona ..	7°	....	zero	....	7°
E.M.G. ..	3°	....	zero	....	3°

The only other machine which satisfied the conditions of the note on p. 424 of the April issue was the Duophone, whose tracking error was zero, 3° and 6° at the three points."

With regard to the unpleasant suggestion that either competitors or voters would stoop to fake the results, it may be admitted at once that we trusted them implicitly not to do so. We had neither stewards nor detectives nor *agents provocateurs* at the Caxton Hall. But we have yet to be convinced that we misjudged the trustworthiness of our readers or of the competitors.

Needless to say the voting cards have been scrutinized with care; the possibilities of faking and collusion have been considered, and we can declare without equivocation that the percentage of returns which betray—not deliberate faking—but a possible

bias is negligible. However, let us set uneasy minds at rest on this point. Anyone who wished to vote for a particular machine from partisan motives would presumably not vote for any other machine as being the best in either test. If we eliminate every card in which the voter has given first place to one machine in both tests or exclusively in one test we eliminate 63 Orchorsol cards, 49 Dousona cards, and 17 E.M.G. cards, leaving the result Orchorsol 70, Dousona 43, E.M.G. 29, reckoned entirely on cards in which the voter has given preference to different machines in each of the tests.

Surely this proves that the order of the three medal winners is the deliberate judgment of the voters, free from all suspicion of chicanery. The voting cards are at the London office and can be inspected by anyone by arrangement.

The other points of our egregious guest's indictment hardly need comment.

The Competitors

The eleven competitors, in order of price, were as follows:

1. VOCAROLA, large Sheraton design Concert Model B, 58 guineas. (The Gramophone Exchange, 29-31, New Oxford Street, W.C. 1.)
2. THREE MUSES, "Princess Mary" Model, mahogany, 30 guineas. (Repeating Gramophones, Ltd., 102, New Bond Street, W. 1.)
3. E.M.G., Model B, mahogany cabinet, £25. (E. M. Ginn, 267, High Holborn, W.C. 1.)
4. DUOPHONE, Empire Model, £24. (The Duophone Syndicate, Ltd., 63, Queen Victoria Street, E.C. 4.)
5. APOLLO SUPER IV., mahogany cabinet, £20. (Craies and Stavridi, 4, Bunhill Row, E.C. 1.)
6. ORCHORSOL JUNIOR, oak table model, £10. (Orchorsol Gramophone Co., 149, South Lambeth Road, S.W. 8.)
7. DOUSONA horn machine, oak pedestal, 9 guineas. (T. Grimes and Co., Ltd., 32, Duppas Hill Lane, Croydon.)
8. MEAD, Model 505, light oak table model with external horn, 7 guineas. (Mead Cycle Co., Inc., 116, Newgate Street, E.C. 2.)
9. FULLOTONE, Model No. 2, cabinet grand, £6 16s. 6d. (Cabinet Gramophone Co., 73, Camden Road, Camden Town, N.W. 1.)
10. PETER PAN DE LUXE, black model, 3 guineas. (Peter Pan Gramophone Co., Ltd., 64, Frith Street, Soho, W. 1.)
11. PIXIE GRIPPA PORTABLE, Model A, leatherette, £2 15s. (Perophone Ltd., 76-78, City Road, E.C. 1.)

The First Test

The order of playing and the records chosen were:

1. MEAD: (a) *Washington Post March* (Col. 1088); (b) *Floral Dance* (Parlo. E.10048).
2. REPEATING GRAMOPHONES: (a) *Prelude in G minor*, Hofmann (Bruns. 50045); (b) *Carneval di Venezia*, dal Monte (H.M.V. D.B. 821);
3. PETER PAN: (a) *Maritana*, Parlo. Meister Orch. (Parlo. E.10057); (b) *Lend me your aid*, Perry (Parlo. E.10220).
4. VOCAROLA: (a) *Quintet E flat Major*, Flonzaley (Victor 6463); (b) *Handel's Largo*, Caruso (H.M.V. D.B.133).
5. ORCHORSOL: (a) *Handel's Largo*, Marek Weber (Parlo. E.10237); (b) *Massenet's Elegie*, Caruso (H.M.V. D.K.103).
6. DUOPHONE: (a) *Paraphrase de Concert*, Cortot (H.M.V. D.B.168); (b) *Una voce poco fa*, Galli-Curci (H.M.V. D.B.261).
7. DOUSONA: (a) *Les deux Pigeons*, Life Guards (Voc. K.05107); (b) *Te quiero*, Fleta (H.M.V. D.A.445).
8. E.M.G.: (a) *Rhapsody in Blue*, Paul Whiteman (H.M.V. C.1171); (b) *Cruda Funesta*, Benvenuto Franci (Col. D.1520).
9. APOLLO: (a) *Miserere* from *Il Trovatore*, Cornet, Sgt. Leggett (Col. 264); (b) *Andrea Chénier*, Duet (Parlo. E.10122).
10. PIXIE GRIPPA: (a) *Oberon Overture*, Coldstream Guards (H.M.V. C.115); (b) *Ay, Ay, Ay*, Fleta (H.M.V. D.B.525).
11. FULLOTONE: (a) *Lynwood March*, Black Diamond Band (Zono. 420); (b) *The Mighty Deep*, Norman Allin (Col. D1437).

The result of the voting for the first six places in this test was

ORCHORSOL,
DOUSONA,
FULLOTONE,
PIXIE GRIPPA,
E.M.G., and
APOLLO.

Of these the Orchorsol was first in 77 cards, second in 42 and third in 21; the Dousona was bracketed first with it in one card and was first in 45 others, second in 39, third in 24; the Fullotone was first in 18, second in 26, and third in 23; the Pixie Grippa was first in 10, second in 20, and third in 28; the E.M.G. was first in 17, second in 16, and third in 25; the Apollo first in 3, second in 7, and third in 19.

The Interlude

The competing gramophones were then retired to the sides of the platform and a concert grand pianoforte kindly lent by Messrs. Blüthner for the occasion was brought forward. The impromptu concert which followed will long remain in the memory of those privileged to be present. Miss Marie Novello began it by playing Chopin's *Ballade in G minor*, with the *Toccata* by Lechetizsky as an encore. Then Miss Helen Henschel and Mr. John Goss sang two duets, *Der Abschied* (Dvorák) and *Gondoliera* (Henschel), Miss Henschel playing the accompaniments; after which she sang two of her

fascinating French songs, *Jardin d'Amour* (arr. Fredk. Keel) and *Le bois charmant* (Leila v. Meister).

The Music Society String Quartet then played the four *Fantasies* of Orlando Gibbons and the two pieces by Eugene Goossens, *By the Tarn* and *Jack o' Lantern*, which they have recorded for the N.G.S. Judging by the rapturous applause which M. André Mangeot and his colleagues received from the audience these records are likely to be very popular with members of the N.G.S.

Miss Marie Novello followed them with brilliant performances of a *Nocturne* by Clifford, Ivor Novello's charming *Gamin*, and, as an encore, the inevitable but none the less welcome *Liebestraum* of Liszt.

Miss Henschel sang English folk songs (arr. Cecil Sharp) as only she can sing them—*The Sprig of Thyme* and the immortal *William Taylor*; and when Mr. Goss joined her on the platform, *Sweet Kate* (Robert Jones, 1609, arr. Gerald Cooper) and *Jen, come kiss me now* (anon, 1600, arr. E. W. Naylor) brought down the house in a rapture of appreciation.

It was the happiest, jolliest interlude between yards of record track that could be imagined, and the bouquets which Mr. Mackenzie handed to the ladies were only symbols of the gratitude which we all felt to the seven artists, who had come to enliven our evening.

Demonstrations

Before the second test began there were three demonstrations which must be mentioned. Firstly, an electrical gramophone shown by Mr. Russell and Mr. Arthur Cotton (the inventor of the Three Muses) which gave great volume and fidelity to records from loud speakers functioning at any required distance from the gramophone, and as far as one could judge, entirely eliminated scratch. The bagpipes were particularly effective, and Stralía singing *I wonder if Love is a dream* was loudly applauded. The price of this particular gramophone is 250 guineas, but the inventors declare that it can be made on the same system for commercial purposes at about 40 guineas.

Mr. Balmain's own machine (to which reference has so often been made in these pages) attracted a great deal of attention, especially after the audience had heard it demonstrated. It scored a triumph with the record of *Adeste Fideles*, sung by massed choirs of 4,850 voices, which Mr. Ridout of the Columbia Company had very kindly brought to Caxton Hall so that readers of THE GRAMOPHONE might have the privilege of being the first to hear it in this country—a compliment which was much appreciated. The record is already famous in America, and will be issued here by Columbia in September. The Balmain machine did justice to it.

The Second Test

For the second test the Editor had chosen the first part of *Uranus* from Holst's *The Planets* (Col. L.1509), and he first played it with comments on the Balmain machine, so as to give the audience an idea of the subtleties for which they were to look out in listening to the competitors. It is a capital record for a test. The order of playing was as follows: 1. Vocarola; 2. Dousona; 3. Repeating Gramophones; 4. Mead; 5. Orchorsol; 6. Pixie Grippa; 7. Peter Pan; 8. Fullotone; 9. E.M.G.; 10. Duophone; 11. Apollo.

The test finished with each machine playing part of a dance record *Let it rain, let it pour* (H.M.V. B.2037); but the hour was late, and a good number of the audience filled in their voting cards after only hearing the *Uranus* record.

The result of the voting was to place the following as the six best:

ORCHORSOL,
DOUSONA,
E.M.G.,
PIXIE GRIPPA,
APOLLO,
FULLOTONE.

The Orchorsol claimed first place in 56 cards, second in 38, third in 30; Dousona, first in 47, second in 32, third in 26; E.M.G., first in 29, second in 20, third in 24; Pixie Grippa, first in 14, second in 25, third in 21; Apollo, first in 6, second in 17, third in 26; Fullotone, first in 12, second in 12, third in 21.

The Combined Result

Adding the results of voting in both tests together the final order is:—

ORCHORSOL,	Gold Medal.
DOUSONA,	Silver Medal.
E.M.G.,	Bronze Medal.
PIXIE GRIPPA.	
FULLOTONE.	
APOLLO.	

The Duophone, which was seventh in both tests, scored 11 firsts in each, but lost ground in the number of seconds and thirds. The Vocarola which received much praise in the "remarks" space on the voting cards, scored 24 seconds and 23 thirds in the combined tests, but only one first. Like the E.M.G. the Mead did far better in the second than in the first test. It is worth noting that apart from the fact that the winning machines were prominent for good track alignment, the Orchorsol and Dousona were the only machines with wooden tone-arms; and the Perophone Co. are the makers not only of the Pixie Grippa, but also of the sound-boxes in the Orchorsol and Fullotone models.

The Editor's comments will be found on p. 111 *et seq.*

PERSONS AND PERSONALITIES

By SYDNEY GREW

V.—CHAMINADE.

CÉCILE CHAMINADE, born in Paris on August 8th, 1861, has had a long enjoyment of popularity, in all European countries. When she first visited London to play in public, which was on June 23rd, 1892, a large audience came together to welcome her, among the members being most of the well-known musicians living at that time in London; the large audience, and the famous men, testified to the fact that this young Frenchwoman had already aroused a general curiosity with regard to her personality—for some years her pieces had been included regularly in concert programmes, and her name was quite a household word.

From those mysteriously distant days (mysteriously distant to those of us who can just remember them) up to the present, Chaminade does not seem to have had the slightest weakening of her hold on the great world of music-lovers. Great men loom in the future, become palpable, and fade into the past, all within ten years or so, and wars are waged about this aspect of music or the other; but Chaminade and her pianoforte compositions dance and ripple and sing their way along like that brook of Tennyson's, to name which is to be guilty of *cliché*.

She has, of course, done more than write charming pieces for the piano. There are many songs, of which *L'Été* used to captivate the present writer in his student days; but whether for its music, or for the girl-students who sang it, he cannot say, not having heard the song this twenty years. There are several suites for orchestra, one or two large works for piano and orchestra, an opera, the ballet *Callirhoë* (of which every one knows some of the "airs"), a sort of symphony for voices and orchestra called *Les Amazones*, trios for piano and strings, and other contrasted works.

But it is by her piano music she won fame and retained popularity, and it is by the same that she will leap into a still wider popularity the moment the gramophone is taught how to reproduce piano tone as well as it reproduces violin and vocal tone. The bright sparkle of her music—its piquancy, neatness, and unaffected charm—these are the qualities that our instrument must take of Chaminade and yield back to us; and as Chaminade is far more delicately poetical than Moszkowski (of whom I wrote last month), while perhaps less energetic in respect of sheer rhythm than that Polish musician, she will thereupon prove a means to lead thousands of amateurs into the world of Chopin, Schumann,

Grieg, and the like, in which is the finer magic and the profounder mystery of art. It sometimes seems to the thoughtful student that minor creators, as Chaminade, Raff, Moszkowski, Scharwenka, Cyril Scott, Saint-Saëns, and the rest, are so valuable in spreading an understanding of music, that their worth is almost equal to that of the masters.

VI.—REICHARDT.

In England, from 1750 to 1800, a number of students and critics and minor authors worked for a reform in poetry, striving to bring it back to the earlier freshness of Elizabethan times; their work and the general spirit of the age, flowered in the poetry of Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, and others of the first quarter of the nineteenth century. In Germany at the same time a number of minor musicians strove similarly to re-establish German song on the folk-music basis, so that (in the words of one of these men) the melody should fit the words in the way a perfectly-made dress fits the body. (For a hundred or more years solo vocal music had been of the kind familiar to us in oratorios; that is, it had been elaborate and of conventional structure.) The work of these earnest musicians, who were all born around 1750, first came to fulness in the songs of Schubert, who was by no means the miraculous phenomenon we are generally told he was, but on the contrary a natural development of carefully controlled conditions, the musical complement of Goethe in lyric art.

I am led to speak of Reichardt here because of that superbly successful Parlophone record, E.10269, one of the most exquisite pieces of gramophone work in the world, which contains the Reichardt song, *Wenn die Rosen Blühen*, which for sheer loveliness touches the heart in a manner surpassed only by such a song as Schubert's lullaby, *An der Wiege* (Parlophone E.10268).

Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752-1814) was a composer of religious music, violin and piano pieces, operas, and many songs, among the latter some hundred-and-twenty-five settings of verse from Goethe. He was a great concert director, very generously disposed to help the young composers of his time. Also he was a politician of widely liberal views, and an author with a bent to idealistic philosophy. But his liberalism was not profitable, and he lost the high official posts his musical gifts won for him; and his musicianship was not that of genius, but only of talent, and his music is for the most part quite forgotten. Even his songs were really good only when the ideas in the text were

light or conventional (with, of course, a few exceptions); and though Mendelssohn, among others of a later generation, thought highly of the composer, nothing can make him genuinely popular again, except that here and there among his songs one will come forward with a curious appeal—the appeal of true simplicity.

Reichardt's daughter, Luise (1788–1826) also wrote songs; and there are two opera singers of the same name known in history as song-makers—Gustav (1797–1884) and Alexander (1825–1885).

VII.—JOHN COATES.

It is a custom to say that a singer, when many years have accumulated, is singing as well as ever, or better than ever. Generally the statement is incorrect. The voice will be weak, the technique unreliable, the mind less active, and the emotional fires will be paled. For all future singers, the gramophone will compel recognition of the truth.

But it is not out of custom that John Coates, sixty years old last June 29th, is said to be singing better than ever. He was always a good singer—good not for beauty of voice, nor yet for superb technique, but for fine mind and spiritual ardour; consequently the impressions he made on us at the beginning of the century were impressions of the safely abiding order, free of that excitable

quality which is an unsafe element in recollection, and they can be brought forward as reliable touchstones by which to determine the character of a musician's later art. To-day Coates's intellect is finer than ever; his poetic vision and spiritual understanding are purer, and all his non-physical abilities are strengthened. It is natural that all this should be so, because such mental and spiritual attributes are the qualities which strengthen themselves with age.

But it so happens that the physical qualities of his singing are likewise improved. In simple technique he has developed, so that his touch in light and fanciful music is swifter and more sure, and his voice is larger. When, at the last Worcester Three Choirs Festival, he sang in Elgar's *Gerontius*, his voice filled the cathedral more completely than did the voices of his companions.

The entire course of his life as artist was planned (unconsciously, no doubt) to bring about this great consummation, from the moment he—a young business man, with wife and child, and no money—ventured into the world of public music, until step by step he had risked at each convenient moment, for further instruction and study, what he had hitherto secured of funds in hand and public position. John Braham sang well late in his seventies; fate agreeing, John Coates will do the same.



BABIES AND THE GRAMOPHONE

By RAYMOND GRAM SWING.

THE development of musical pleasure is born of repetition. That is the reason why the gramophone makes such a substantial contribution to human joy. Adults know this through their own experience. How many parents realise that their experience is valid for children, especially for very small children, even for babies? The benefit of an article like Mr. Barbor's should be extraordinary. It is primarily a challenge to parents. Not every child could be so precocious or so musical as Mr. Barbor's, but countless children who might derive profound and permanent delight from music are not getting the chance, merely because their parents are ignorant of the scope of a child's enjoyment.

Repetition is the secret. We sang the same songs to our baby, always in the same order, day after day. We had no thought of influencing his future, or of developing his aptitude for music. He enjoyed them, that was enough. At sixteen months he discovered that he could make sounds, a month later he had sung clear through the tune of his first song. At eighteen months he had sung twenty-

four tunes, and would sing twelve of them when we spoke the words of the first line.

So we bought a gramophone. The first records, rightly enough, were nursery songs. But I added to them the *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, by César Franck. The sonata represented a plot on my part. I loved it, and I hoped that by the time the boy was three or four years old I might have cultivated a similar love in him. I would just have it around and play it occasionally and so influence his taste without his suspecting it.

But at the end of a few weeks he loved the sonata more than the nursery songs. How do we know? Because we could see the music "play" him. That is, he moved his body in rhythm with it; when it was thoughtful, his eyes had a far-away look; when it was vigorous or sprightly, they were alight with joy, and as it became exciting he sat on the edge of his chair, legs and arms going at a bewildering speed, and his cheeks flushed and his expression radiant. And then at the climax he would peal out laughter, not at, but with, the music. And in two months he was humming themes from the sonata. I bought only

one more set of nursery songs. He himself showed his preference for richer music.

The next purchase was the *Sixth Symphony* of Tchaikovsky; he was eighteen months old at the time. He liked the first movement right away, but was not to be intrigued by the others till the first had been digested. In a few weeks of daily playing he lost interest in the first movement and discovered the third, which reigned as favourite for a few weeks. Then he transferred his favour to the second, and finally, several months later, to the fourth. In the meantime was added the *Kreutzer Sonata* of Beethoven which had an immediate success. He was singing parts of it within a week, and would hear it through every day without lapses in concentration.

When he was twenty-seven months old the *Fifth Symphony* of Beethoven was added to the repertory, and transcended all the previous records in popularity. He learned in a short while to ask for it by singing the opening bars, and then as now—he is not yet three years old—he kept his body moving with its rhythms, and his face showed all the varying emotions of the music. Long since he has learned to chime in at will, also to name each movement correctly when he hears it sung, or to sing the opening phrase of each when he hears it named.

This symphony was followed by the *César Franck symphony*, which in its turn had to be played through every morning. His enthusiasm for it reached its height after several weeks listening and learning. Then the music became so impelling that at some of the climaxes he could not keep silent, and in all earnestness joined in, singing at the top of his lungs. But interest ultimately waned, and was given with even greater devotion to the Schubert *Unfinished Symphony*. Shorter numbers were also added, such as Debussy's *L'Après-midi d'une Faune*, *Song of the Volga Boatmen*, Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Hymn to the Sun* and suite from *Scheherazade*, and others. I thought he was not going to like the Debussy, because it lacked in clean-cut rhythm and simple melodic line. When it was played at first he would yawn and fail to concentrate. But repetition scored its triumph at last; he came to know it, and to be moved by it as much as by other records, and—the final test—to ask for it.

We did not try to mould his taste, and we deliberately added some jazz records. This was a burst of paternal fair play. I did not like jazz myself, but was impressed by the claims of its primitive realities. Certainly a child is a primitive; let him have the jazz. But jazz records, after a short run, were sooner forgotten. They are still there to be played, and they are not asked for once a month, not any more, even Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. Perhaps rhythm is not enough to a primitive who can have more.

The last records to create a sensation were the *Pétrouchka* of Stravinsky. The first time he heard

them he listened with rapt attention to all eight sides. And then they were repeated, by imperious request, for twenty-three consecutive days. The twenty-fourth day he asked for something else, on the twenty-fifth he remembered them again. Then two days passed without a request. And now he is ready for something new.

In the meantime his musical knowledge has been extended by many songs. He is insatiable in wanting always new ones as soon as the old ones have become an old story. By the time he was thirty-one months old he himself sang 167 songs. Since then the folk-song and nursery-song books have been outgrown, and we are singing Schubert songs, of which twenty-two are now in demand. Many of these, like his folk-songs and nursery songs, he sings with all words. In the case of Schubert he understands not a syllable, as he is learning them in German. Like his records, he knows all his songs by sight, the eye remembering as well as the ear.

Where this boy differs from Mr. Barbor's wonderful son is that music has remained for him an abstraction. We have told him no stories to "go with" and "elucidate" the music. *Pétrouchka* for him has no narrative. It is sheer music. And music for him is delight. This delight is made of rhythm and melody, but more than these, of the drama of rising action, and the poetry of lovely mood. Nor is there sadness in music for him. Sadness must be a later discovery in a child's life. The calamity of the dead child in the *Erkönig* produces in him only the purest joy in the rising action, the musical action. I do not say that I insist on this abstraction. I only emphasise that the child is adult enough to thrive on it. It is a language unto itself, and even a baby has the key to it.

This boy is a normal child. Only it is not usual—as it should be—that music has added another dimension to his enjoyment. He will drop any game to hear it. It is the one joy above all other joys. It makes him forget the pain of his injuries, it purges him of his sulks. Other parents, I am sure, can tell much the same story. But those who cannot probably have only themselves to chide.

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GRAMOPHONE CELEBRITIES

XII.—Sergei Rachmaninoff

By JOHN F. PORTE

ANY present-day review of the work of Sergei Vassileivitch Rachmaninoff must take into account his dual rôle of composer and pianist, for in both aspects his accomplishments are undoubtedly beyond the merely talented. In an ordinary musical review of Rachmaninoff, his fame as a pianist must intrude on his greatness as a composer. In a review of him as a recording-artiste for the gramophone, his importance as a composer must undoubtedly overlap the consideration of him as a pianist. Rachmaninoff can hardly be considered as the ordinary capable composer-pianist, for the rare estimate may be made of him that were he not a famous composer he would still be known as a very fine pianist, and were he not a pianist he would still be recognised as a composer of outstanding importance. A similar case in our own time was provided by the poetic genius of the late Edward MacDowell. Let us briefly consider Rachmaninoff as composer; and such a consideration must here be all too brief for his requirements.

Born at Novgorod on April 2nd, 1873, Sergei Vassileivitch Rachmaninoff studied music in Leningrad (then St. Petersburg) and Moscow. His gifts for composition were recognised as early as 1892, when he received a gold medal. He has toured the U.S.A. and England, and in 1912 was appointed conductor of the old Imperial Opera in St. Petersburg. His compositions include a Mass, a symphony, operas, pianoforte concertos, chamber music, songs, etc. An aria from his opera, *Aleko*, has recently been recorded by Chaliapine (H.M.V. D.B.691). Other works not performed by Rachmaninoff himself will be found in the leading gramophone catalogues. The keynote of his musical creative mentality is a sombre Russian fatefulness, often tinged with a very beautiful vein of quiet, wistful poetry. I asked M. Rachmaninoff whether he believes in the traditions of the great Russian nationalist composers, and his reply was, "Yes; most emphatically." I was very glad to receive so definite an assertion of faith, for I have always believed that Rachmaninoff can uphold the musical greatness of Russia, although he is not in the full flush of the assertive nationalism of Borodin, Moussorgsky, and that formidable champion, Rimsky-Korsakoff.

As a pianist Rachmaninoff is widely established, and it is always thoroughly interesting to note the play of his powerful mentality on familiar pianoforte music. Here, indeed, lies the chief attraction of a recital by him. Whatever he plays has an individual rendering that is interesting, even if we

do not always agree with it. He is often too heavy for such things as waltzes by Chopin, yet in larger works by this composer he reveals much. I heard him play the *Fantasia in F minor* and the *Funeral March Sonata*, and these took on a vaster aspect than they are generally made to show. The sombre Russian mentality made a fateful canvas of the *Fantasia*, while the *Funeral March* movement became a relentless, tragic procession. On the other hand, his thoughtful moods do not seem to interpret fanciful lightness and charm into Chopin's waltzes—there has been only one Pachmann! Rachmaninoff is a superb player of his own music, and to hear him play his popular *G minor Prelude*, of which he has made a record, with its foreboding opening and poetic middle section, is a revelation.

Of Rachmaninoff's records in the catalogue of the English branch of The Gramophone Company, Ltd. (His Master's Voice), I think that D.B.410 gives a good insight to the composer's mentality, for it contains the contrasting, yet typical *Preludes* in G major and G minor. The former has a very beautiful mood of quiet contemplation. His arrangement of the Minuet from Bizet's *L'Arlésienne* is charmingly played. The Tchaikovsky pieces are given an equally intimate rendering. I prefer Cortôt's playing of *The Children's Corner* numbers. I asked M. Rachmaninoff his own opinion as to which were his best records, and he expressed a preference for a *Waltz* by Grieg (D.A.371) and the *Spinning Song* of Mendelssohn (D.A.370). Perhaps modesty prevented M. Rachmaninoff from commending records of his own music. We should certainly have the second and third movements of his *Concerto, No. 2, in C minor*, but these are not issued in England because the work is not recorded in complete form. This is an admirably conscientious view, and doubtless the English H.M.V. authorities know their own business best, but there has been much interest here in the records referred to. They are *Victor* issues obtainable in London at The Gramophone Exchange, 29 and 31, New Oxford Street, W.C. 1. I understand these particular records sell as soon as they arrive, so they should be ordered to be reserved if not in stock at the moment.

I did not ask M. Rachmaninoff about his *Prelude in C sharp minor*, and I hope he excused the deplorable manners of those people who demonstrated for the work at his English recitals. For a composer of Rachmaninoff's standing, this judging of him by a slight and early work is either insulting or else a deplorable display of ignorance of musical values.

M. Rachmaninoff believes without a doubt that the gramophone is a serious form of music giving, and that it has contributed much to the appreciation of music. He finds recording difficult, and does not know of any artiste who is not nervous when making records. He asks everyone to leave the recording room, and only likes the necessary experts. M.

Rachmaninoff believes that his records are faithful, "like photographs"; his only objection is that the gramophone does not reproduce the piano as well as the voice or stringed instruments. To all his gramophone admirers, M. Rachmaninoff sends: "My best thanks and greetings."



THE FIRST HALF-YEAR'S BAND RECORDS

By W. A. CHISLETT

THE most pleasing feature of the first half of this year has been the steady output of records, equally good from both a musical and technical point of view, by the Vocalion Company. Their monthly supplements have invariably contained at least one record by the Life Guards Band, and the average musical interest of these records is very much higher than that of the records made by any other one band. In view of the recent revival in London, *La Boutique Fantasque* (K.05159) is the most interesting of all. The suite is not, of course, complete, only one 12 inch disc being devoted to it, and the selection is very similar to, though not identical with, that played by the Scots Guards and issued by the Velvet Face Company last year. This is rather a pity for, being ballet music, the two interpretations are necessarily very similar. Both these records are so good that it is very difficult to indicate the better except on purely personal grounds and I shall leave each individual to work out his own salvation. I like the *Emerald Isle Selection* (K.05169), which has some very jolly music in it, better the more I hear it. When Mr. German took up the task of finishing this opera, which was incomplete when Sir Arthur Sullivan died, he found that only two numbers had been actually completed. Thirteen numbers had not been touched and in the remainder the airs had been written but not orchestrated. This selection contains two of the songs—*When Alfred's Friends their King Forsook* and *The Jig*—both of which are on the second side—completely written by Mr. German. The rest is Sir Arthur Sullivan's work, at any rate so far as the tunes are concerned: and tunes are the main thing when considering a military band arrangement, because the arranger frequently has to depart considerably from the original orchestration in order to get the best effect. I have never been fortunate enough to hear this opera, but

judging from the orchestral and band selections I have heard at various times, Mr. German did his work extraordinarily well.

Capriccio Italien (K.05175) is another record that can be thoroughly recommended. The playing is consistently good and sounds appropriately light-hearted and carefree, while the arrangement is quite a good one except for a short bridge passage about two-thirds of the way through the first side. These few bars are not very successful, and I do not think they ever can be in any military band transcription unless, possibly, when played by a full band of sixty or so. I cannot enthuse over the *Overture to The Flying Dutchman* (K.05136) simply because the only use I have for military band versions of Wagner is to arouse interest in the Master's works and induce people to want to hear them as originally intended, and *The Flying Dutchman Overture* is already popular enough for this to be unnecessary. Many ardent Wagnerians must have had their interest aroused originally by hearing a military band selection. Apart from this purely personal objection I found the record excellent and it will doubtless be a very popular issue. The latest record in this series is a selection from *Carmen* (K.05178), which recalls to my mind a lamentable episode which occurred at a provincial orchestral concert some time ago. The chief attraction was the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Landon Ronald, and a moderately good programme was given including, I remember, the *Fifth Symphony* of Beethoven. The applause at the end of the programme was so insistent that an encore had to be given. Sir Landon marshalled his forces and gave us, of all things after such a programme, a miserable selection (lasting less than five minutes) from *Carmen*, in which the trombones were encouraged to be as blatant as possible. It speaks well for the audience that the applause was quelled and not repeated, and I think I can say nothing

better of this record than that it has made this music tolerable to me again and helped me to forget my dismal experience. The recording of the euphonium and clarinets is particularly faithful, and the only criticisms I have to offer are that the flute is too prominent in one place and that I do not agree with all the *tempi*.

The Coldstream Guards have made several good records, of which perhaps the best is *Carnival* (C.1195), a suite of five short pieces by Montigue Ring. This is light graceful music and is the work of a daughter of Aldridge, the well-known South African Shakespearian actor, who writes under this pseudonym. Another good record is a selection from *The Damnation of Faust* by Berlioz (C.1201). Occupying both sides of a 12 inch disc this selection is more representative than many of the operatic selections that are issued and contains some of the lesser known music from this opera. I am surprised that Berlioz is so neglected by military bands for much of his music is eminently suitable for this medium and all of it is unhackneyed, which, unfortunately, cannot be said of much of the music played by bands both in the recording room and at concerts.

The Royal Air Force Band have not recorded, as yet, much serious music; one of their few efforts in this direction is the two marches from Vaughan Williams' *Folk Song Suite* (B.1945). This record is so good as to make one hope for more like it, and the music is perfectly delightful. Everyone should buy this record unless they have already got the Life Guards' version of this suite. I hear that this band has made four 12 inch records of Mr. Winterbottom's excellent arrangement of music from *The Ring*, one record being devoted to each of the operas. This is splendid news and I am looking forward with keen interest to this issue by The Gramophone Company. It is just the thing to awaken the interest of many people in this glorious music, and this set of records, when issued, will form an admirable introduction to the study of it.

The Grenadier Guards records issued recently have not added to their reputation nor to that of the Columbia Company. Of a poor batch *Reminiscences of Tosti* (9041) is the best and is quite an attractive record. Their latest issue *The British Army Fantasia* (9039 and 9040) is evidently to replace Nos. 366 and 367 which bore the same title and was played by a band consisting of detachments from three of the Guards regiments and conducted by Lieut. F. W. Wood of the Scots Guards. I cannot imagine why it has been thought necessary to reissue such worthless stuff as this is and it would be interesting to know how many copies of this new issue are sold, for it is difficult to believe that anyone will waste nine shillings on these records. The labels, which are worth quoting, are as follows: 1. "*Introduction Daybreak, etc.*" 2. "*Morning Parade and Music of*

Infantry Regiments, etc." 3. "*Artillery and Cavalry Regiments, etc.*" 4. "*Night Tattoo, Alarm, Attack, Victory, etc.*" Sides 1, 2 and 4 I do not pretend to understand, but as an ex-gunner I do not look upon side 3 as at all complimentary! By the way I never knew before that the Grenadier Guards Band included pipers! Perhaps the paucity of new records by this band is accounted for by the fact that they have been re-recording a lot of old numbers. This is very good news and must be taken as an *amende honorable* for having perpetrated the atrocity I have just referred to. By the courtesy of Mr. Ridout of the Columbia Company, I am able to give a complete list of these re-recordings, all of which are now on sale.

- 107 *Pique Dame Overture* (Suppe)
Zampa Overture (Herold)
- 508 *Valse Triste* (J. Sibelius)
Praeludium (Järnefelt)
- 513 *Tancredi Overture* (Rossini)
Ruy Blas Overture (Mendelssohn)
- 516 *The Burial of Cock Robin (Marche Grotesque)*
(Dr. Williams)
The Parade of the Tin Soldiers (Leon Jessel)
- 578 *Reminiscences of Gounod*. In 2 Parts (arr. F. Godfrey)
Introducing: Part 1.—*Excerpts from Faust; Mirella; Queen of Sheba*. Part 2.—*Excerpts from Faust; Romeo and Juliet*.
- 582 *Raymond Overture* (Thomas)
The Barber of Seville Overture (Rossini)
- 587 *La Bohème Selection*. In 2 Parts (Puccini)
Introducing: Part 1.—*Act 2, Introduction; The Bohemians; Rudolph's Song; Rudolph and Marcel Duet; Dance, Act 4*. Part 2.—*Schaunard, Act 1; Musetta's Song; Totto, Act 2*
- 610 *The Meistersingers Selection*. In 2 Parts (Wagner)
Introducing: Part 1.—*Prelude*. Part 2.—*Dance of the Apprentices, Prize Song; Finale of the Overture*.
- 612 *Reminiscences of Sullivan*. In 2 Parts (arr. W. Winterbottom)
Introducing: *Martyr of Antioch; Trial by Jury; H.M.S. Pinafore; Patience; Iolanthe; Pirates of Penzance; Distant Shore; Iolanthe March*
- 625 *Ballet Egyptien* (Luigini)
(1) *Allegro*; (2) *Allegretto*
- 626 (3) *Andante Sostenuto*; (4) *Andante and Allegro*
- 744 *On the Quarter Deck—March* (K. J. Alford)
March—Ellesmere (J. E. Grace)
- 844 *Les Sirenes Valse* (Waldteufel)
Les Patineurs Valse (Waldteufel)

I have not had an opportunity of hearing these yet, but if the recording is up to the standard of the modern Columbia band records they will be a very welcome replacement in this Company's catalogue.

The solitary Brunswick record that has come my way this year is the one referred to by P. P. last month, and I am reluctantly compelled to agree that the music is banal. I cannot agree, however, with him when he suggests that a great voice might save the situation in the original version so far as *Solenne in quest'ora* is concerned; surely two voices would be necessary! The voice parts are taken in this record by a tenor trombone and a euphonium and a beautifully steady and rich tone is produced from both instruments though I do not like some of the phrasing. Apart from this the best is made of rather poor and unsuitable material, and personally I do not think that even Caruso and Scotti on H.M.V. D.N.105 (splendid though it is as a record) succeed in raising the music above the level of mediocrity.

The last few months have produced a large crop of good records of marches and other rhythmic music suitable for playing out of doors. Of these the *Tiger's Tail March* (Aco G.15643), *King's Guards March* (H.M.V. B.1966), *King Cotton March* (Beltona 748), *Old Comrades March* (Parlophone E.5359), *The Mad Major March* (Aco G.15684 or Beltona 750), *Marche Lorraine* (Aco G.15703) and *Looking Backward* (Beltona 652) are worth special mention. The last of these is one of those clever pot pourris by Herman Finck and will recall many pleasant memories to all who hear it. Among other things it will recall the days when variety halls really gave a programme of variety!

The Beltona Company have issued a couple of interesting records by the "Florentina Band." The *Overture to Mignon* (680) and the *Coronation March* from Meyerbeer's *Prophet* (679) are both excellent though I do not like all the *tempi* in the former; but the *Introduction to Act III. of Lohengrin* (679) is not up to the same standard. The tone of these records is particularly full and forward but does not sound like that of an English band, and the nearest approach to it that I can remember is the tone of Creatore's Band.

The Welsh Guards Band have made several good light records for the Aco Company to which I have referred previously, but their *Mignon Selection* (F.33075) is very poor and shows up badly against the *Overture* played by the Florentina Band. The selection is badly put together and neither playing nor recording are good. This is a pity because the *Aida Selection*, which occupies the reverse, is good in every way.

The issue of brass band records so far this year has been rather meagre, and the two best undoubtedly are *Libella Overture* and Friedmann's *Slavonic Rhapsody* (Zono. 2550), played by the Horwich

R.M.I. Band and *Reminiscences of Tschaiakowsky* (Aco F.33067), played by the Australian Newcastle Steel Works Band. I have referred to Mr. J. Brooks, the soprano cornet player of the Horwich Band, before. He is probably the finest soprano player in England to-day, and all records by this band are worth getting if only in order to follow his beautiful phrasing and fine technique. The band, however, is good in all departments and being on the "light" side is more suited to the recording room than some of the other first-class bands who produce a bigger and heavier tone which on a record sometimes sounds ponderous. Both items call for much dexterity and brilliance in playing and are first-class arrangements. *Reminiscences of Tschaiakowsky* was dealt with at length when issued some months ago. It is a splendid record.

St. Hilda Colliery Band is represented by three new records, two of which are the first records of this band to be issued by the Imperial Company. Of the three I think *Narcissus* (Imperial 1423) is the best. It is most unlikely material for a brass band and its success, therefore, is all the more unexpected and pleasing. The latest Zonophone issue (2572), being *Selections from Der Freischutz* and *The Damnation of Faust* by Berlioz, is not good. Both sides are rather dull and the playing, though by no means bad, is not up to the St. Hilda standard. The latter selection suffers so by comparison with the Coldstream Guards record from the same opera, both as a selection and because of the fact that a military band is a more suitable medium for playing this music than a brass band that I hope I have not been unduly critical because of the inevitable comparison. The time for the annual contest at Crystal Palace is drawing nearer and by the time this appears the test piece will have been published. This will doubtless be recorded in due course by numerous bands for various manufacturers, and so we may expect the issue of brass band records in the second half of the year to be more interesting than in the first.

I dislike selecting "best records" because so much depends on one's own personal taste, but in case it should be expected of me, I shall plump for *La Boutique Fantasque* by the Life Guards Band, and *Libella Overture* and *The Slavonic Rhapsody* by the Horwich R.M.I. Band.

W. A. C.

* * *

A Defence

Mr. John F. Porte defends his preference for Albert Coates as a conductor for Tchaikovsky (p. 31) against Mr. Lionel Gilman (p. 82) by quoting Mr. F. V. Schuster (p. 82)! "Mr. Coates has played Russian music in Russia, with Russian players and listeners; he was born in Russia, and the real aspect of the music is bred in him," he writes.

ARMCHAIR PHONATICS

By P. WILSON, M.A. (Oxon)

IV.—Record Wear (*continued*)

THE groove made by the recording stylus at the beginning of a record is a regular spiral known to mathematicians as the Archimedean spiral. So soon, however, as the recording diaphragm begins to be vibrated by sound, the spiral cut out by the stylus becomes a wavy curve on each side of the Archimedean spiral. When the reproducing needle is tracking in this curve these excursions from the spiral impose vibrations upon the sound-box diaphragm and so cause sound to be reproduced. It follows that the first conditions of good reproduction and minimum record wear are that the needle should be able to follow the groove accurately and intimately and with as little strain as possible, and that every displacement of the point from the Archimedean spiral should create a proportionate displacement of the diaphragm.

This is not by any means a simple matter. If it were possible to have the needle tracking quite vertical, many of our difficulties in this respect would be easily overcome. In that case there would be no restrictions, other than those imposed by the diaphragm and the stylus mountings, upon the motion of the needle point from side to side. But anyone who cares to try the experiment of playing a record a few times with the stylus and steel needle vertical, will soon convince himself that under present conditions this kind of vertical tracking is out of the question. The failure is due partly to the friction between needle and record being at right angles to the needle, and partly to the way in which the stylus transmits vibrations to the diaphragm. I shall return to this point again later.

In this connection the fibre needle has a great advantage over a steel needle. When the stylus is set at an angle of 60° to the face of the record the fibre point is really tracking vertically; the portion of the needle which is contained within the groove is a regular triangular pyramid whose axis is vertical. The horizontal section of the needle at the top of the groove is an equilateral triangle, the point of the needle being below the centre of the triangle. There are two important consequences of this. The first is that the fibre tracks on the bottom of the groove and does not ride on the sides; it is only occasionally and when the waviness of the groove is very pronounced that it touches the sides at all. As the point of the fibre gets blunted, either by friction or compression, it fills the groove more fully, and therefore (if it is still holding up) gives a solid tone, but

even then its contact with the walls of the groove is confined to the lower portions. In support of these conclusions the following facts may be cited:—

(1) A fibre held in the groove at the proper angle may be rocked from side to side of the groove without difficulty; the angle of the cut face of the fibre at the point is 60° or less, and the angle of the groove is greater than that.

(2) If a record is treated with "Glissoline" and played with steel needles until no more of the preparation is apparent, playing with a fibre will then bring a lot more to the surface.

(3) A hardened fibre is very effective in removing fluff, etc., from the bottom of the groove.

(4) Immediately after cutting, a fibre needle is apt to give a thin and squeaky reproduction; the tone is much improved after the needle has settled down a little.

The second consequence to be noted is that the point can follow the twists and turns of the groove without much difficulty. If the point were a circular cone with its axis vertical, so that the vertical section were the same in every direction the difficulty would be even less, and it is possible that the needle might then be able to respond to very tiny variations in the sinuosity of the groove which the flat-sided point would miss. But the difference is not very large and the fact that the needle does not fill the groove makes this difference less important than it otherwise might be. It should be noted, however, that to use a fibre at an angle very different from 60° would destroy to a large extent these advantages of vertical tracking.

The ability of a fibre needle to follow the groove thus depends very little on the needle-track alignment of the machine. Unless the tracking error is very bad (say, over 20°), so that the back edge of the fibre scrapes the walls of the groove, the wear with a fibre needle, used at an angle of 60° , is so small and regular as to be quite negligible. Even so, good N.T.A. is an advantage with a fibre needle since then the needle receives the tiny blows from the record in its strongest directions, and therefore does not break down so readily. Indeed the general proposition is true that the factors which lead to record wear with a steel needle only cause a fibre or a Xylopin to break down.

P. WILSON.

(*To be continued.*)

DANCE RECORDS IN RETROSPECT

By RICHARD HERBERT

THERE are at least three good reasons for making a survey of the dance records that have been issued during the last six months, and for summarizing the tendencies, which I have noted from time to time, of the bands which play the tunes, of the tunes that they play, and of the general attitude of ballroom dancers towards both. This cannot help being to some extent a personal view, but I am fortified in my own opinions by those that I have heard expressed by my friends and by what I have noted to be the general attitude of those around me. First let me say with all possible emphasis, do not let us give up our old favourites! It *may* be fashionable to dance to new tunes every day, and it certainly appears to be the favourite boast of many bands that they learn a fabulous number of *new* tunes every week, but when we know how rarely it is that we find an exceptionally *good* new tune, why on earth, when we actually have the choice—as we most certainly have when we use the gramophone for purposes of dancing—should we wish the whole time merely to be dancing to what is *new*? How many people, one cannot help wondering, would not prefer to hear again some of the other successes of the past few years, and risk the possible anguish of old memories revived and old associations renewed? One purpose then is to refresh our own memories; a second is to help new readers of THE GRAMOPHONE to make a representative choice of the best records issued in recent months. So much for the actual lists. There is yet a third purpose, quite different from the other two, and that is to criticise what has been done with an eye to improvement.

Most of the dance bands still look with favour upon the trumpet, and many of them continue to misuse it; the most frequent result being hideous cacophony aggravated by ugly noises from similarly misused saxophones. It has always seemed to me that the trumpet is an instrument with very serious limitations, one that could well be omitted from the band and whose function could be performed better by some other instrument. Now the saxophone is in quite a different category; it can sustain the melody almost by itself being capable of a variety of very beautiful effects; and must, I feel sure, have other potentialities which have not yet been explored. There are many other instruments that still wait to be used to their best advantage, and among these is the human voice. Even if I am fastidious in the use and performance of the vocal chorus I flatly refuse to regard this fastidiousness as a fault.

Do other people, too, simply grin and bear it? To me it seems just as important that the vocal chorus should be well sung and by a good voice, as it is that the pianist should not be merely a beginner, and that the piano should be in tune. Yet there is only one band that can be recalled to memory which possesses a singer who can be relied upon to do justice to this important part which is allotted to him. Why in mercy's name is this?

But let me not be too severe. When all is said and done one must confess whole-heartedly that the bands keep up a very high standard and *do continue* to improve. The same is true of the recording and the general turn-out of records. There are, however, one or two small points of arrangement or classification that might be improved upon, and it is to be hoped that the practice of issuing 12in. dance records which was started some little time ago, and is now falling into disuse by most of the issuing companies with the exception of the Parlophone Company, will be revived and become more general. The two small points anticipated above are that each record, at any rate among the higher priced records, should be devoted to one kind of dance, and each to one dance band. The reasons for this are obvious.

Someone, I suppose, will now say: What of the dancer and the tunes? Well, the dancer is much the same as ever; perhaps a little less skilful because he thinks himself more expert, and certainly *blasé* and a little bored because he thinks there is nothing now to learn. But this is very largely his own fault, for he has banished the tango, the one-step and the blues, and refuses to learn the waltz. Is it surprising in the circumstances that he tires of the incessant fox-trot and grouses at the teachers and the bands for not introducing something new and original? The time no doubt will come when the young and restless ones will take us again unawares. As to the tunes they speak for themselves. The best are better than any we have had before; many of the others are neither good nor bad. But if the best are few in number, we must console ourselves with the fact that good bands can do much with even mediocre tunes.

Every reader must realise the difficulty of making a choice of the best records issued during a period of six months when he is told that this has entailed listening to something like six hundred tunes. And that is probably rather an under- than an over-estimate. The present writer makes no claims to infallibility and gives his opinion only for what it is worth. He has paid small attention to popular

acclamation, because that is often merely imitative and deals only with actual performance, and not with gramophone records, which are bound to vary greatly in the recording. An attempt has been made to choose records equally for the originality of the tune and for the skill with which the tune is played.

With the fox-trots an additional list is made of the best records of *particular* tunes which have happened to become very popular, but which have not gained admittance into the very select and exclusive list of best records.

I will begin with the fox-trots and deal with them in the order their appearance, for I consider it beyond my powers to place them in order of merit and certainly beyond my presumption. TROPICAL PALMS and *Baghdad* (IMPERIAL 1384, 10in., 2s.) both played by the Continental Dance Orchestra; the former has a fine rhythmical accompaniment for its beautiful deminuendoes and mellow saxophone solos and is in every way a fine performance. NILE NIGHT and *Where's my sweetie hiding?* (ACO G.15602, 10in., 2s. 6d.) both by Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra; *Nile Night* has an exceptionally good vocal chorus to its fascinating melody and should be better known. NOLA (and *Mamma's gone*) (H.M.V. B.1964, 10in., 3s.) played by the Boston Orchestra, is a gay tune with one of the best piano parts since *Kitten on the Keys*. TEA FOR TWO and I WANT TO BE HAPPY (H.M.V. B.1978, 10in., 3s.), the former played by the Benson Orchestra of Chicago and the latter by Jan Garber and his Orchestra. One need only say that both are played with the greatest possible effect and in the most intriguing manner. TITINA and *Nancy* (VOCALION X.9548, 10in., 3s.); with *Titina*, notable for its beautiful orchestration, the London Band surpassed itself. A pulsating accompaniment forms a splendid background to an enchanting melody. MADELINE and *Will you remember me* (PARLOPHONE E.5354, 10in., 2s. 6d.), both played by Vincent Lopez and his Hotel Pennsylvania Orchestra. ALABAMY BOUND and ME NEENYAH (COLUMBIA, 10in., 3s.), both played by the Hannan Band, with its pretty persuasive methods; the former impressionistic and at times almost realistic, the latter plaintive and sentimental. There is another record of *Alabamy Bound* that should be mentioned and that is (H.M.V. B.1970, 10in., 3s.) played by the Savoy Orpheans.

The best record of TAKE A LITTLE ONE-STEP turned up later than its fellows from *No, No, Nanette*. It is (H.M.V. B.2001, 10in., 3s.) played by the International Novelty Orchestra. In July the Marek Weber Orchestra at last succeeded in producing a record to please everybody and not merely its own specially devoted band of followers—JOHNNY and *There's always time for loving you* (PARLO. E.10291, 12in., 4s. 6d.). About *Johnny* there is something almost Russian-balletesque;

it is beautifully phrased and no instrument is misused. Of the numbers from *Rose Marie* I consider that TOTEM TOM-TOM has been most successfully recorded. The record of which I am thinking is played by the Hannan Band, together with *Pretty things* (COLUMBIA 3642, 10in., 3s.).

The following is the list of other popular fox-trots, to which I referred above: *Sahara* (and *I wonder what's become of Sally*), H.M.V. B.1925, 10in., 3s.; *Shanghai* (and *The only, only one for me*), H.M.V., B.1981, 10in., 3s.; *Follow the swallow* (and *On the Z.R.3*), Aco. G.15648, 10in., 2s. 6d. (vocal); *Peter Pan, I love you* (and *The only, only one*), Columbia 3613, 10in., 3s.; *Oh! How I love my darling* (and *Me Neenyah*), H.M.V. B.1975, 10in., 3s.; *All alone with you* (and *Dream maker of Japan*), H.M.V. B.1934, 10in., 3s.; *After the storm* (and *Burning kisses*), Parlo. E.10261, 12in., 4s. 6d.; *Dreary weather* (and *Memory Lane*), Vocalion X.9522, 10in., 3s. So much for the fox-trots.

Lack of space compels me to list the best waltzes without special comment: IN SHADOWLAND (H.M.V. B.1935, 10in., 3s.—Savoy Havana Band); HAUNTING MELODY (H.M.V. B.1954, 10in., 3s.); UNDER THE SOUTH SEA PALMS (VOCALION X.9519, 10in., 3s.—Ferrera Franchini Quartet); MEMORY LANE (VOC. X.9522, 10in., 3s.—The Bar Harbour Society Orchestra); THE GOLDEN WEST (COL. 3580, 10in., 3s.—Savoy Havana Band); SUMURUN and *Somewhere a voice is calling* (H.M.V. 1986, 10in., 3s.—Savoy Havana Band); VIOLETTA and REIGEN (PARLO. E.10277, 12in., 4s. 6d.—The Marek Weber Orchestra); TWIRLING MILLIONS and CARNIVAL CHILDREN (COL. 9032, 12in., 4s. 6d.—The Geiger Orchestra); LISTENING and LOVE'S DREAM (H.M.V. B.2012, 10in., 3s.—The Savoy Orpheans) and LISTENING and *When the one you love loves you* (COL. 3655, 10in. 3s.—The Hannan Band); INVANO and SERENATA D'AMALFI (PARLO. E.5372, 10in., 2s. 6d.—The Bohemian Orchestra).

Tangos have been few and far-between: EL ESTANDARTE and LA GRINGUITA (COL. 3582, 10in., 3s.—The Manuel Pizarro Orchestra and The Tano Genaro Orchestra, both of Paris); PELOTA (VOC. X.9532, 10in., 3s.—The London Band).

There are few one-steps worthy of mention: PATSY (Aco. G.15604, 10in., 2s. 6d.); O KATHARINA (Aco. G.15582, 10in., 2s. 6d.); SOUTHERN MEMORIES and *Medley of Medleys* (H.M.V. G.1188, 12in., 4s. 6d.—The Savoy Orpheans); TOUT L'MONDE FAIT ÇA (Imperial 1394, 10in., 2s.).

I end up on a note of warning. The absence of correspondence on the subject of dance records has been noticed with due seriousness by the Editor who wonders whether there is a sufficient number of people interested to justify the space which "Dance Notes" usually occupies. Let us have your views!

National Gramophonic Society Notes

issued to members with the Beethoven *String Quartet in F major, Op. 59 No. 1*, and the Mozart *Quartet for Oboe and Strings in F major (K 370)*, five twelve inch records and three ten inch records.

The records should be played at a speed of 80 revolutions a minute.

The Beethoven Quartet

The name of Count Andreas Kyrillovitch Rasoumovsky is preserved to fame by the three great works dedicated to him by Beethoven; but not, as has often been the case with the patrons of men of genius, entirely on that account, as he appears to have been an excellent musician. The Count played second violin in his own quartet which met regularly to perform, amongst other music, quartets of Haydn and Beethoven. Possibly these were studied under the direction of the composers themselves; a stirring thought.

Rasoumovsky's appreciation of what must have seemed the novel and startling music of these three quartets, comprising Beethoven's *Op. 59*, (especially this first one which Romberg, a famous 'cellist contemporary, is reported to have thrown on the ground, declaring it to be unplayable,) proves him to have been a man of artistic insight.

First Movement. Allegro.—The noble tune on the 'cello with which the first movement opens is characterised by Beethoven's fondness for marking the key; the only harmonies employed for eighteen bars being the tonic and dominant. What a contrast to the lavish expenditure of our moderns! The quickly reached climax shows Beethoven, to use a rather mixed metaphor, thinking symphonically in terms of the string quartet, but never violating the limits of his chosen form. It is certain that no quartet before this date was filled with the emotional breadth and spaciousness that we find all through this one. A passage for 'cello alone seems to promise fugal development, but it is followed by some quite unsuspected and wonderful modulations, laid out arpeggio-wise, that lead to the second theme on the first violin with the 'cello playing a version of the first tune. Development of this material begins on the second side (Part II) of this first record and the recapitulation on first side of the second record (Part III). It will be noticed that the viola has the second theme on this occasion. Beethoven, as always, makes his themes to bear all the fruitful suggestions they contain; to write of them is impossible, to hear them is to realise anew the genius of the composer.

Scherzo. Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando.—The rhythmic phrase on the 'cello which is the main feature of the *scherzo* calls to mind at once Beethoven's use of the timpani in the *Violin Concerto*, composed in the same year as this quartet, and in the *E flat Piano Concerto*, to name two famous instances. This, if only by association, purely orchestral effect is heightened by the horn-like answer of the violas immediately after the second violin has played the jaunty *scherzo* tune. The two ideas are subjected to a varied play of emotion, now massive, now tender, now almost coarsely gay, now wistful. The third idea marked *dolce* (it may be picked out as beginning the fifth side) is an exquisite snatch of melody that keeps returning like a messenger of peace. A big climax is reached on the sixth side by means of an imitatorial device built upwards and a hearty burst of laughter concludes this wonderful movement.

Third Movement. Adagio molto e mesto.—The slow movement bears the inscription in Beethoven's sketch book, "a weeping willow or acacia tree over the grave of my brother"; but, Grove points out, of his brothers, August had died twenty-three years before, Carl not till ten years after, and Johann after the composer himself! Grove hints that as Carl's marriage contract had been signed when the quartet was being written the inscription may be a Beethovenish joke. There is, indeed, no suspicion of jest in the lovely tune with its mournful downward droop which the first violin gives out, nor in the second tune on the 'cello; certainly there is none in the emotional heights reached by the music as it develops. A long florid passage on the first violin joins this movement on to the

Finale. Allegro.—This movement begins, presumably out of compliment to Count Rasoumovsky, with a Russian theme—one of the very few known instances of Beethoven borrowing material—but it undergoes a swift process of de-nationalisation in the composer's treatment of it! Beethoven was certainly not the man to waste his time on pretty speeches. By the time this tremendously vigorous movement is over the *Thème Russe* bears every sign of its great borrower's signature. N. P.

First Record. (Score used, Eulenburg.)

Side 1.—Allegro. Beginning to page 7, bar 6.

Side 2.—Page 7, bar 7, to page 13, first note of bar 21.

Second Record.

Side 1.—Page 13, first note of bar 21, to page 20, bar 14.

Side 2.—Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando. Page 20, bar 15, to page 25, last bar.

Third Record.

Side 1.—Page 26, first bar, to page 32, bar 4.

Side 2.—Page 32, bar 5, to page 35, last bar.

Fourth Record.

Side 1.—Adagio molto e mesto. Page 36, first bar, to page 38, bar 10.

Side 2.—Page 38, bar 11, to page 43, first note of bar 8.

Fifth Record.

Side 1.—Page 43, second note of bar 8, to page 47, bar 5; and, Thème Russe, page 47, bar 6, to page 51, bar 12.

Side 2.—Page 51, bar 13, to end.

The Mozart Oboe Quartet

There is a poem of Blake which describes this quartet, so it seems to me, better than pages of analytical notes. This is the Introduction to the "Songs of Innocence."

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me:
"Pipe a song about a lamb!"
So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again!"
So I piped; he wept to hear.
"Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read."
So he vanished from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed,
And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

The oboe is undoubtedly the hero of this quartet and has but little respite from playing; a bar or two here and there. Yet in spite of the rather thin penetrating tone of the instrument which so easily induces a feeling of monotony, there is not a note that one would wish away. Against a background of violin, viola, and 'cello Mozart has given the oboe just those decorative passages, those long held notes that so exactly suit the genius of the instrument. The first movement (*Allegro*) and the last (*Rondo—Allegro ma non troppo*) have an irresistibly joyous pastoral atmosphere—the latter has surely one of the most enchanting, light-hearted, tunes in all music—and the short *Adagio*, in which the oboe sings so poignantly, serves to remind us that if there are "Songs of Innocence" there also are "Songs of Experience," that, after childhood, we must encounter.

One cannot leave this delicious work without a special word of grateful thanks to Leon Goossens—the Kreisler of oboists. There are, it is said, Rolls Royces and motor-cars; one might add (with a brave disregard of grammar) that there are Goossens and oboists. No other player one can think of has the amazing quality and individuality of tone which he possesses. It is playing that, surely, realises absolutely the composer's intentions. N. P.

(Score used, Eulenburg.)

First Record. Allegro.

Side 1.—Page 3, first bar, to page 5, last bar.

Side 2.—Page 6, first bar, to page 9, bar 5.

Second Record.

Side 1.—Adagio. Page 9, bar, 6 to page 10, bar 16.

Side 2.—Rondo. Allegro ma non troppo. Page 10, bar 17, to page 13, first note of bar 19.

Third Record.

Side 1.—Page 13, second note of bar 19, to end.

Side 2.—Sinfonia from Cantata 156 (Bach).

OUR PUBLICITY COMPETITION

THIS COMPETITION CLOSES ON AUGUST 31st

THIS is the last month in which you can win some of the prizes offered below. The competition was started in March in order to increase the circulation of THE GRAMOPHONE by the efforts of our readers; and, as was explained in the last number (p. 68), the circulation continues to increase, but very few of the new subscription order forms contain the name of the introducer. It was necessary, therefore, to state "*definitely and unequivocally that the first, second and third prizes in both classes will only be awarded to competitors who have got more than twenty new subscribers, i.e., have qualified for the Thirty Shillings' Worth of new records.*"

The first prize for Individual Readers has been further increased by the generosity of the Parlophone Co., Ltd., who have offered the seven records of Beethoven's *Eroica Symphony* in an album (value £1 14s. 6d.).

What you have to do

Write to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1, for some Subscription Order Forms—twenty, fifty, a hundred—as many as you think you can profitably use.

When you get them write your name—or, if you are a dealer, stamp the name of your firm—in the left-hand corner of each, after the words "Introduced by . . ." Then distribute them. Give them to people, post them to friends, post them to strangers. Persuade, cajole or bully them till they fill in the form and pay a year's subscription.

The Order Form, when filled in, should either be sent to THE GRAMOPHONE or else given to the nearest newsagent or dealer (who should be asked to forward it to 58, Frith Street, for identification); but be sure that your name is in the left-hand corner if you want credit for the recruit.

The prizes are divided into two groups :—

I. FOR DEALERS

1st Prize, TWENTY-FIVE POUNDS, and the Editor's original copy of the Fourth Movement of the Schumann Pianoforte Quintet (see June, p. 2).

2nd Prize, SEVEN POUNDS

3rd Prize, THREE POUNDS

[NOTE.—Subscription Order Forms completed must be forwarded to 58, Frith Street, W. 1, to be checked and returned.]

II. FOR INDIVIDUAL READERS

First Prize :

- (a) **TEN POUNDS.**
- (b) An E.M.G. portable gramophone, given by Mr. E. M. Ginn.
- (c) A "Sesame" cabinet, model O, given by Messrs. Bournemouth, Arundel and Co.
- (d) An "Astra" No. 4 sound-box or other "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of Two Guineas, given by the Gramophone Exchange.
- (e) Beethoven's *Choral Symphony* in an album, given by the Gramophone Co., Ltd.
- (f) Twelve "Polydor" records of winner's own choice, given by Messrs. Alfred Imhof.
- (g) The Editor's Prize—the Third Movement of the Schumann *Pianoforte Quintet* (see June, p. 2).
- (h) Beethoven's *Eroica Symphony* (No. 3 in E flat) in an album, given by The Parlophone Co., Ltd.

Second Prize :

- (a) **THREE POUNDS.**
- (b) An "Astra" No. 2 sound-box or other "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of One Guinea, given by the Gramophone Exchange.
- (c) Bound volume of miniature scores of Beethoven's string quartets, given by Messrs. Goodwin and Tabb (1924), Ltd.

Third Prize :

- (a) **TWO POUNDS.**
- (b) "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of Half a Guinea, given by the Gramophone Exchange.

To every reader who gets TWENTY new subscribers—
THIRTY SHILLINGS' WORTH OF RECORDS
(reader's choice).

To every reader who gets TEN new subscribers—

A copy of "GRAMOPHONE NIGHTS," with the Editor's autograph.
The Editor's decision in all cases will be final.

JULY COMPETITION

The competition announced on p. 68 of the last number, as the result of correspondence between the Editor and Mr. George Blake, the Editor of *John o' London's Weekly*, should have been closed on July 27th. But Mr. Blake has with great spirit offered two guineas towards the prize; and while gratefully accepting them, we prefer to make them into a second prize and to add a third prize of one guinea, at the same time prolonging the competition for another month, so that more of our readers may enter for it.

The prizes of £5, £2 2s., and £1 1s. are offered for the best lists of *Twenty-five Records which are generally admitted to be good music, but which at the same time have been tested on the "man in the street" and found successful* (see correspondence on p. 81 of the July number).

Rules to be observed :—

1. Make a list of the twenty-five records (not twenty-five works), giving make, catalogue number, size, price and title, and writing only on one side of the paper.
2. Write your name and address on the list, *not* on a separate slip.
3. Post it to reach THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1, not later than August 31st.
4. No coupon is required. Readers may send in as many different lists as they like.

The Forum

Two articles in the Forum for May, June and July took half the votes of the readers who bothered to send in postcards. They were *Realism* and the *Gramophone* (June), by C. S. Davis, and *On Musical Appreciation* (July), by "Scrutator." They dead-heated for the first prize, so we have divided the first and second prizes equally and sent £4 to each author. The third prize of £2 goes to Eric N. Simons for his *Portablunderings* (June). Two voting postcards are equally near to the correct result, and a pound's worth of records has been divided between W. Weedon, of Seven Crosses Hill, Tiverton, Devon, and L. Unsworth, Haydock, St. Helens, Lancs.

Besides the three prize-winners, the following articles received several votes: *Chat* (May number), by "Indicator," *Of Catalogues and Serapbooks* (June), and *The Right Gramophone for Chamber Music* (May), both by J. C. W. Chapman, and *Paderevski's Records, a Note* (June), by B.D.W.

TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

Holidays

Silence reigns in the factories for a brief week or fortnight at this time of year. By an excellent consent they all close down, and though there is no apparent gap in the flow of records and machines, we may wish all those who labour for our pleasure a happy rest at home or seaside or wherever they go from the noise and smell and dust of their usual surroundings. But do they escape, do they rest, those record-makers? Or do they still disport themselves on roundabouts and swings, or collect bubbles and sand along the beach? Do they sit, not all alone, in the moonlight and murmur "A very enjoyable double this," in the sound-waves of the sea shore?

Art Supplements

Thanks are due to all the readers who took the trouble to tell us their views about the Art Supplements, as requested in the June number (p. 17). Such advice is of the greatest value, and without the support of the large majority of our councillors we should not have undertaken the production of coloured portraits of the great composers. As it is, we are encouraged to do so; and in due course these will begin to appear.

The London Gramophone Societies

Most of the stalwarts of the London societies were in evidence at the Gramophone Congress and Tests, and holidays alone prevented two or three of the best-known members from coming to support us. The Secretary of the Ealing Recorded Music Society—one of the smaller suburban societies—reports that "fourteen of our members visited the Congress and eight members sat out both tests." It is no wonder that we scored a success with such help as this.

The Phonograph Society of Victoria

Visitors to Melbourne in Australia are sure of a welcome from this new Society if they communicate with the Hon. Secretary, A. J. B. Haldane, c/o the Melbourne General Hospital. The Society is young, but extremely flourishing. Its president is Sir James Barrett, K.C.M.G., etc., a well-known figure in musical and medical circles. It meets every week for recitals, lectures and discussions, but has "special nights" once a month. It has a lending library of records, and so keen and careful are the members that after five months of continuous use the records "play practically as well as when first purchased." We can only hope that every member who borrows records in this and in all other societies with a lending library has to submit his gramophone to the Wilson protractor test.

An average attendance of 100 members is not bad, and is steadily increasing—one recital having an audience of over 370. We congratulate the promoters of the Society and hope to publish reports of their activities from time to time.

Lenglen on Tennis

A lesson on playing tennis comes from the Gramophone Co. (H.M.V. B.2068), in a 10in. record of Mlle. Lenglen's voice. It is a deep, distinct voice with an occasionally explosive quality which relieves it from monotony; the diction being good, the matter of the discourse admirable (except for one split infinitive), and the appeal of lawn-tennis almost universal, there is no reason why

this record should be merely a museum piece of historical importance. It might easily be a best seller. What about Miss Joyce Wethered, before she forgets all about golf; or Jack Hobbs on cricket?

Sigrid Holmquist on Gramophones

This fascinating film-star—best known to us in the "School for Wives," a Vitagraph picture—has apparently two hobbies, at least, which amount to habits. One is bathing and the other gramophones. How many feet of film and how many dozens of "stills" have been taken of her indulging in one or the other it would be hard to say; but she even found time to come to THE GRAMOPHONE office and to be photographed with a copy of the paper in her hand—and winding-up the office Vocarola. She wanted to be the second film-star to write for THE GRAMOPHONE and here is what she wrote:—

"Over in Hollywood where all the films are made, companies often go out for days 'on location'—that is, filming outdoor scenes. They may travel hundreds of miles into the depths of the Californian desert, and then it is just like holiday camping except that during the daytime one is working strenuously. But, in the evening, when the light is no good for photographing, comes our leisure. And that is gramophone time.

"Nearly every player has a gramophone—they call them all phonographs over there—of some sort and, at any rate, there are plenty of records available. It is then that the players find that they are not too tired for a little dancing, or to listen to an impromptu programme of records.

"And that is why I bless the gramophone—especially the sort you can carry about. SIGRID HOLMQUIST."

A Mozart Quintet

A distinguished correspondent calls our attention to the fact that "one of the most beautiful records I have come across—Mozart's *Quintet in G minor*—recorded by the Columbia Company, appears to be out of print and unpurchasable. Perhaps your influence," he adds, "might avail to elicit a new edition." Not influence—but prayers might be effective.

The Savoy Orpheans

As a foot-note to the short article on the Orpheans in the last number we may add a list of their six best sellers:—

B.1915.—*All alone and Hum a little tune.*

B.1917.—*Dream Daddy and Driftwood.*

B.1919.—*Why do you call me wonderful one and Go 'long mule.*

B.1936.—*I love the moon and Millions of Harlequin.*

B.1994.—*It ain't gonna rain no mo' Fantasie.*

C.1179.—*Savoy English Medley.*

Broadcasting from St. Peters

We have to acknowledge the receipt of some historical photographs from Messrs. Alfred Graham and Co., Ltd., showing the Amplion loud speakers installed in St. Peter's at Rome on the recent occasion when the Pope broadcast for the first time during the ceremony of the Canonisation of Sister Teresa. Full accounts of this epoch-marking event have appeared elsewhere, describing how more than thirty thousand people heard the Holy Father's voice from every corner of the Basilica; but it transpires that the Pope himself "never noticed that he had the microphone by the side of his chair."

Has he heard the records of the Sistine Choir yet?



Mlle. Lenglen after making a new tennis record.

There are some new records being made which will interest his Holiness—of the plainsong portions of the Roman Catholic Schools Hymn Book. The Editor of *The Universe* and the Editor of *THE GRAMOPHONE* are both concerned in this project.

Leon Goossens

Mr. Goossens is the subject of an anecdote told by Mr. Robin Legge in the *Daily Telegraph*.

"It is due to a gift from Dame Ethel Smyth that he to-day is alive. As a souvenir of the production in London of 'The Boat-swain's Mate' Dame Ethel Smyth presented Eugène Goossens, jun., with a cigarette case. Eugène has a weak heart, and rarely smokes, so he handed the case to his young brother, who carried it with him during the war. On Nov. 5th, 1918, Leon was wounded, and the bullet which might have downed him was deflected when it struck the cigarette case."

The Music Society Quartet

It is not only the audience at the Caxton Hall the other evening which appreciates the playing of this quartet. Wherever Mr. André Mangeot and his colleagues are heard they are received with enthusiasm; as witness the following comment which appeared in the *Independence Belge* on June 7th: "Le quatuor anglais Music Society (MM. A. Mangeot, H. Berly, B. Pecker, J. Barbirolli) ont donné des exécutions parfaitement équilibrées et très finement nuancées d'un quatuor de Haydn, de celui de Ravel, des Esquisses pour cordes d'Eugène Goossens, enfin des trois Fantaisies pour trois archets d'Orlando Gibbons."

Some Climate

A reader in Vera Cruz writes on the protection of his records from damp by special precautions: "I always keep inside the lid a box filled with pieces of asbestos 'wool' soaked in a concentrated solution of calcium chloride and dried. This material becomes dripping wet in four or five days, and has to be re-dried. I do not know what the effect of the climate would be without this precaution, which I have used from the first, wishing to take no chances."

But does moisture injure shellac? Or does the lid refer to the gramophone rather than to the record carrier or cabinet? It would be interesting if all our overseas readers, especially in the tropics, would send us their experiences of gramophone and record upkeep.

Record Prices

Correspondence pours in on this subject. We are urged to spare no effort to get the price of records lowered still further. One valued reader points to the analogous case of bicycles which were kept up to a preposterous level of prices for years on the plea that a reduction of price would mean a lowering of quality, till the bubble was pricked by the importation of vastly cheaper machines which brought the prices down all round. Another reader evidently thinks that we in England are lucky. In New Zealand he pays 12s. 6d. for our 8s. 6d. records, 10s. for our 6s. 6d., and so on.

We look forward to seeing the Vocalion prices (5s. 6d. Celebrities, 4s. 6d. Standard section for 12in. records) adopted all round; and have repeatedly said that the first company which gives us classical music on half-crown records is going to achieve a scoop. But in the meantime we welcome the Columbia announcement of a reduction in the Light Blue Label series of a shilling on 12in. and of sixpence on 10in. records (i.e., to 6s. 6d. and 4s. 6d.), as a step in the right direction—especially after Mr. Louis Sterling's recent remarks on price reduction.

Bishops and the Gramophone

The Editor's despondent note about the conversion of bishops to the gramophone in the June number was perhaps unjustified. A correspondent points out that when the daughter of the Bishop of Ely was married recently to the organist of Ely Cathedral, the first item in the list of presents was, "The bride from her father—gramophone." This is not conclusive evidence to the cynic, but we give His Grace the benefit of the doubt, and count him an enthusiast for the gramophone.

An Advertisement

One of our advertisers, the Orchorsol Gramophone Co., has evidently taken to heart the strictures expressed (far more forcibly than in the censored note 303 on p. 99) by a Johannesburg correspondent in the last number. They reply: "An Englishman's plea for brighter advertising in your journal touches a responsive chord in the heart of our artist, but from a practical point of view it must be remembered that advertisers have to do more than provide pretty pictures, the *selling* value of which is doubtful. An artistic lay-out appeals to nine out of ten men (and women for that matter), and that, with a straight unfaked photograph of our goods coupled with a plain statement of what they will do, together with price, sells more of our goods than any other form of advertising. We should like to thank 'Englishman' for his suggestion regarding dimensions and weights, and shall incorporate this in future advertisements."

This is excellent; but we cannot let the Orchorsol people "get away with it" quite so blandly. One of their advertisements in the July number was open to misinterpretation, and we had to draw their attention to the explicit rule of entry for the Caxton Hall Tests, that the competing machines should be gramophones on the market at a stated price. Needless to say the Orchorsol Co. expressed their regret that the advertisement should have been capable of misinterpretation, and confirmed the fact that the Orchorsol Junior was already and would continue to be on the market at £10.

We mention this matter (and also we may say that *every* competitor in the Tests signed a certificate to the same effect), in order that any readers who have suspected us of excessive ingenuousness may be reassured.

Verklärte Nacht

By the courtesy of Dr. A. Eaglefield Hull we are allowed to reprint his translation of the poem of Dehmel which is prefixed to the score of Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht*, familiar at least to all members of the National Gramophonic Society. This translation appeared in the July number of *Musical Opinion*.

Two beings go through a cold, dark forest,
The moon rises over the high oaks;
No other beings disturb Heaven's light,
Which peers over the dark, distant peaks.

The woman speaks:

I carry a child which is not thine,
Sin-laden, I go with thee;
I have wronged myself greatly.
No longer do I believe in happiness;
Yet still do I long deeply for the things of life,
For the joys of mother-happiness and loyalty.
Now give them to me.
For I have risked much;
I have given my wavering body to a strange man
And still bless I myself for it.
Yet now has life avenged itself;
Now have I encountered thee and am thine.

The woman goes with faltering steps,
She looks ever upwards;
The moon also seems to waver.
The dark woods are now flooded with light.

The man speaks:

May the child thou hast be no burden to thee.
See how clear the universe shines;
There is radiance all around.
You travel with me to the cold sea;
Yet warmth flows from you to me,
That will transfigure the strange child.
Thou has brought splendour to me;
Thou has made me myself a child.

He seizes her boldly;
Their breath mingles in a close embrace;
The two go forth into the starry night.

* * *



REVIEW DAY AT "THE GRAMOPHONE"

(This Caricature was left anonymously at the London Office. If the perpetrator will communicate with us she (or he) will receive a suitable reward. The Reviewers think it excellent. They recognise each other easily, but not themselves.)

Analytical Notes and First Reviews

CÉSAR FRANCK'S STRING QUARTET IN D.

H.M.V.—D.1006-D.1011 (six 12in. records, 6s. 6d. each).—**Virtuoso String Quartet : Quartet in D (César Franck).**

Mr. Dunhill wrote in his book on Chamber Music (1913) "César Franck's *Quartet in D major* is almost unknown in this country"; a reproach which, fortunately, each successive year has lifted a little and which the eagerly awaited issue of the recorded version potentially removes.

The quartet was written in 1889—a year before the composer's death—the only other works to follow it being the opera *Ghiselle* and the three organ chorales.

It may be fairly said to represent the high water mark of César Franck's genius, the full flowering of his exquisite art.

D'Indy tells us that it was during his fifty sixth year that Franck first contemplated the writing of a string quartet, but the idea was not carried to a conclusion until the composer's sixty-seventh year though "his piano was littered with the scores of Beethoven, Schumann and Brahms." Indeed, the first actual sketches date only from the spring of 1889. So spiritual and delicate an organisation as the string quartet would seem to be the ideal medium of expression for a composer like Franck. The result is one of the most perfect chamber music works of our time, unique in feeling and form. This last is of the cyclic kind used by the composer in his violin sonata, quintet and symphony, i.e., a germ idea running through the work yet, in this case, never mingling with it. D'Indy gives the three versions of this *lied*, as he calls it, which show the difficult progress of Franck's thought before he arrived at the third and ultimate version.

Every page of the quartet is of high technical interest, but those to whom this is of moment will need no guidance in these pages, which provide only a rough outline of what the untutored listener may expect.

First Movement. Poco Lento.—The *lied* is given out, *largamente*, by the first violin accompanied by full harmonies on the other strings; soon it drops down on to the 'cello with rich harmonic elaboration in the other parts. A more developed version of it is heard later on, again on the first violin, with an arpeggio bass. This side finishes with the first violin anticipating what is to be the main theme of the *allegro*.

Parts II., III. and IV. Allegro and Poco Lento.—The difficulty of annotating this music without reference to the score is almost insuperable, but the alert listener will detect in addition to the first theme a subsidiary one on the 'cello (in the same key, D minor). The second subject proper starts, on the first violin, about an inch from the beginning of the record, but so unobtrusively as to make this prosaic announcement necessary. So ends the exposition of the first movement. The *lied* now returns, *poco lento*, on the viola, being treated semi-fugally; the entries, after the viola, are second violin, 'cello, first violin. Then comes a recapitulation of the material of the first movement (Part III.) with a lovely tune on the 'cello that grows out of what has gone before. The second violin and viola tremolos, with a very soft counter-theme on the first violin, make this passage one of exquisite beauty. This tune comes to a considerable climax before that subsidiary one, noted before, again returns on the 'cello (Part IV.), and the second subject, high up on the first violin. Finally we reach the *coda* which is the playing of the *lied* again with a tiny reminiscence of the *allegro*.

Second Movement. Scherzo.—Not boisterous or hilarious. Rather, music bathed in a half-light. Fauns dancing by moonlight! Two easily distinguishable tunes are used before an episodic section is reached. This is remarkable for a very definite allusion to the later part of the opening theme of the *Prelude to Tristan and Isolde*. It is unmistakable, even to the pause that follows!

This is even more the case in the *coda*, where just before the closing pizzicato chords the first violin, unabashed, sings out clearly its Wagnerian declaration.

The fauns have fled into the woods, leaving the pale ghosts of the immortal lovers to haunt the scene!

Third Movement. Larghetto.—The tune of the slow movement, which spans thirty-two bars before its final cadence, is surely one of the loveliest ever penned by man. Heard again at the

opening of Part II. and yet again on Part III., its rich beauty, its exalted passion, will come to those to whom it is unknown with all the force of a spiritual revelation; to the rest in the loving accents of a dear friend.

There is a tempestuous climax which only subsides momentarily for a whisper of the *Tristan* passage, to reach an even higher point until peace and tranquillity again return.

Fourth Movement. Allegro Molto—Larghetto—Allegro Molto—Vivace—Allegro Molto—Poco Lento—Allegro Molto.—This formidable list of timings indicates the sequence of Franck's thought in the *finale* to the quartet. He starts off with his main theme but interrupts this after a few bars with a reminiscence of the slow movement; then the *allegro* again asserts itself, only to be elbowed out by some passages of the *scherzo*. Its urgency is once more interrupted by the *lied*, first in slow, then quick time with which it struggles for precedence. The former wins, exposing itself to us in a new exquisite guise, ever climbing upwards, sounding a most ethereal beauty.

Then begins the *allegro molto* proper with which, however, the *lied* is from time to time interwoven, though the two ideas are never mingled. The one tune, the *allegro molto*, is, like Martha, troubled over many things; the other, like Mary, is wrapt in divine contemplation. That is a symbol of the wonderful old composer's life. Hard at work all day long, he never ceased to lift up his heart in prayer and praise to his Creator.

To say that the playing and interpretation of the Virtuoso Quartet are worthy of the music is to give the highest possible praise. Yet it is so. Evidently each artist has lovingly studied the work and has succeeded in penetrating, perhaps not always—that would be perfection—to the heart of its remarkable beauty.

The recording also is of the highest excellence.

These are words not lightly spoken; but having in mind the eager desire for this quartet manifested by the members of the National Gramophonic Society, it is to be hoped they will not be spoken in vain.

N.P.

BRUNSWICK

(July issues.)

50057 (12in., 8s.).—**Claire Dux** (soprano), with orchestra: **Voi che sapete** and **Deh vieni, non tardar** from **Nozze di Figaro** (Mozart).

30108 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Edith Mason** (soprano), with orchestra: **The last rose of summer** (Moore) and **Good-bye** (Tosti).

10160 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Friedrich Schorr** (baritone), with orchestra: **Worship of God in Nature** (Beethoven) and **Linden Tree**, Op. 89, No. 5 (Schubert).

10106 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Sigrid Onegin** (contralto), with orchestra: **Caro mio ben** (Giordani) and **Dormi pure** (Scuderi).

2812 (10in., 3s.).—**Virginia Rea** (soprano), with orchestra: **Indian Love Call** from **Rose Marie** and **Giannina Mia** from **The Firefly**.

Claire Dux, incomparable Pamina in the *Magic Flute*, exquisite Sophie in the *Rose Cavalier*, has a voice whose flutey tones are above all else suited to the music of Mozart, and the effortless beauty of her production allied to a fine musical intelligence makes her singing of these two well-known arias most enjoyable. *Voi che sapete* needs perhaps a more tentative, breathless interpretation: as, in the opera, it is the youthful Cherubino's expression of his love for Susanna. It is a pity that such a curious kind of orchestra is used here and in one or two of the other records, a complaint that has often been made about other companies. Why not use the orchestration devised by the composer and not cornets and wind generally where strings are indicated?

Two old war-horses received good sympathetic renderings from Edith Mason, who appears to be quite free from the usual prima donna vices except that at the end of Tosti's song she ejaculates "goo-hoo-hood-bye"!

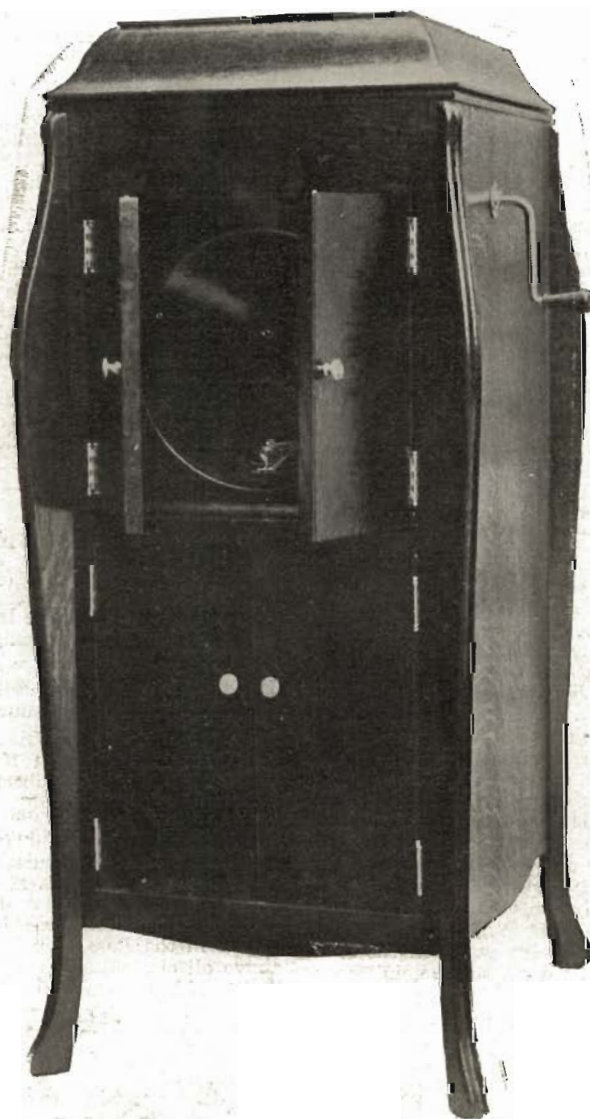
In a recent book called "The Idea of Great Poetry," Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie speaks of "momentary phrases of enchantment: the phrases on which the spirits of imagination assemble as

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incalculably as the scholastic angels on the point of a needle." Such a phrase, a magnificent one, opens Beethoven's song, *Gottes Macht*, one of a set of six (Op. 48), known variously in English as *Creation's Hymn* or here, rather clumsily, *Worship of God in Nature*. It is nobly sung by Frederick Schorr, and the orchestral accompaniment this time is entirely appropriate. I do not feel this to be the case with *Der Lindenbaum*, Schubert's song. This is the fifth number of the song-cycle *Winterreise* (*A winter's journey*) in which the lover laments the linden tree who had murmured to him, "Thou couldst find rest with me." The piano accompaniment is what Schubert intended; this one, well done though it is, focusses too much attention on itself. Again wind accompaniment to *Caro mio ben* seems entirely out of keeping with the spirit of the fragrant little song, which is beautifully sung, though a trifle over-ornamented, by Sigrid Onegin, a contralto (well known on Polydor as well as Brunswick records) with a voice of pure velvet. The reverse is a dullish lullaby, again perfectly given.

The *Indian Love Call*, which bears a strong family resemblance to Rimsky Korsakoff's *Chanson Indoue*, but is none the worse for that, is sung as well as could be desired by Virginia Rea. Both it and the charming little song on the reverse call for better singing than the average musical comedy star can produce; in fact for just such a delightful artiste as Miss Rea. The recording of all these discs is excellent.

N. P.

COLUMBIA

(August Issues.)

- 3662 (10in., 3s.).—John Payne and Lawrence Brown (duets): *Nobody knows de trouble I've seen; Every time I feel de spirit; It's me, O Lord*. Negro spirituals.
- 3683 (10in., 3s.).—William Heseltine: *Mary of Allendale* (Lane Wilson) and *All for you* (Eathope Martin).
- X.323 (10in., 6s.).—Elsa Stralia: *By my fireside* (Gitz Rice) and *I heard you singing* (Eric Coates).
- D.1524 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Y. Bratza (violin): *Slav Dance in G minor* (Dvorák-Kreisler) and *Un poco triste* (Suk, Op. 17, No. 1).
- 9045 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Harold Williams: *On the road to Mandalay* (Hedgecock) and *The Trumpeter* (Dix). With orchestra.
- L.1652 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Bruno Walter: *Isolde's love song from Tristan* (Wagner).
- L.1655 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra conducted by Frank Bridge: *Hansel and Gretel Overture* (Humperdinck).
- L.1666 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Miriam Licette and Frank Mullings: *Give me your darling hands*, and *Miriam Licette: One fine day from Madame Butterfly* (Puccini).

First, an announcement we shall all hail with pleasure: the Columbia prices have been reduced. In the Light Blue series 12in. records are now 6s. 6d. and 10in. 4s. 6d. The higher-priced records now come into line with those of H.M.V. "...That gives ten thousand blessings now, and bids us hope for more." The words come to mind whenever the recording companies add another to their many good gifts. They have blessed us musically during the last few years, in generous measure. They are helping us to run up a library of records by these price-reductions. We hope they will not consider us ungrateful if we fix our eyes on a still lower level—say 4s. 6d. for a 12in. disc—and gently beg them to "look at this, and do your best." Meanwhile, we return thanks to Columbia for this earnest of their intention to ease the strain on the gramophile's pocket.

Of the negro songs, *It's me* shows the pleasure the untutored mind takes in the repetition of a simple melodic fragment. The harmonised and drawn-out last line is out of focus with the style of the song, though it may, for all I know, be characteristic of the negro. *Nobody knows* is taken very slowly at the start. *Every time* is a real ragtime tune. It comes off well. The voices are bold rather than particularly beautiful.

I presume that Mr. Heseltine's *Mary* song is one of Mr. Lane Wilson's arrangements of eighteenth century ballads. The orchestral introduction and interludes are not very well harmonised. These arrangers will persist in putting much too sophisticated chords in, and touches of modern ballad-harmony, that consorts not too well with the simpler tunes of older days. The songs are, I know, often sophisticated, but not in the way of the ballad of to-day. Mr. Heseltine is pretty good here. He should keep his

tone steady in a *forte*, and not be so strenuous. Our singers need to learn the value of contrast, and of repose. *All for you* is one of Mr. Martin's less inspired trifles. Note the singer's too even stressing of the first few words. This is one of his constant weaknesses.

Miss Stralia sings these unimportant songs better than she sang the two I noticed last month; but I am not any happier in listening to an artist of some capacity wasting her talent on commonplace, highly derivative tunes such as these. The *Rice* song is especially poor—rhythmically broken-winded. This gentleman's memory is the only faculty that serves him well.

Josef Suk (b. 1874) is a Czecho-Slovak composer. He was a pupil of Dvorák, whose daughter he married. Musical organisations in Prague honoured him by a gala performance of his works last year, as a jubilee birthday celebration. He has been heard here, as one of the members of the Bohemian String Quartet. This little fiddle piece has a turn of melody of a personal kind, that is attractive. It moons round one or two thoughts in a vein of agreeable melancholy. The Dvorák dance on the other side is piquant, romantic and has that touch of the so-called "negro" style that will be remembered by those who have heard his *New World* symphony and *Nigger* quartet, but which, as I have before opined, is as likely to be Bohemian as negro.

Mr. Harold Williams is one of our best baritones. His upstanding style is just right for the old Hedgecock setting of Kipling's natty ditty, that is by no means a bad ballad. *The Trumpeter* is not so good; its portentous manner is rather artificial. It has long been a favourite, however, and Mr. Williams sings it as well as it can be done, almost. I should prefer to hear him in some songs of better musical value—a Parry or a Stanford, for instance.

The final outpouring of Isolde's love and sorrow is one of the hundreds of purely lovely pages in Wagner. That love-duet of Act 2, that we have sometimes (until we got into our Wagnerian second wind) found lengthy, supplies the themes for the final scene, and is here raised to a higher power still. We feel the poignancy of the parting as we feel few things in all opera. What a giant Wagner was! This is true art, that takes us off our earthly feet and carries us aloft with it in spirit. This disc goes with several recent Columbias in the hierarchy of recording.

The B.N.O.C. did a good turn when they revived *Hansel and Gretel*, a capital little opera, of which the overture had for too long been the only part known here. One or two other samples of Humperdinck might be looked out by the recorders. He had a capital talent. This charming overture shows how well he knew his Wagner orchestration, and how clear were his melodic ideas—quite his own. The performance is brisk, rather quicker in the first part than some I have heard, and musically in all ways. I said recently that I hoped we should hear more of Mr. Bridge, who has not, I think, been called on as a conductor quite so often as his talents warrant. He has long had reputé as the most reliable deputy in London, and Sir Henry Wood, the Phil., and others have made sudden and pretty trying calls on him, with admirable results. We should like to see him down for a L.S.O. or Phil. concert next season.

How frequently these Puccini war-horses are trotted out! It seems as if every company must have recorded *One fine day* half a dozen times. Miss Licette is one of our best Butterflies, and her performance here is well up to her artistic standard. She conveys the personality of the heroine, and does not make us conscious of listening to a prima donna. Mr. Mullings is something more conventionally operatic. He has rather too much brain for this kind of music. It shows. The two of them raise the roof in the good old Puccinic style, at the end, and that is all that really matters.

K.K.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

(August issues.)

- D.A.635 (10in., 6s.).—John McCormack (tenor), with piano acc.: *Komm bald*, Op. 5, and *Feldeinsamkeit* (Brahms).
- D.B.728 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Tina Poli-Randacio (soprano) and Maartje Offers (contralto), with orch. acc.: *Fu la sorte dell'armi and Pietà ti prenda* from *Aida* (Verdi).
- D.A.691 (10in., 6s.).—Alfred Cortot (piano): *Cradle Song*, Op. 49, No. 4 (Brahms), and *Etude in A flat major*, Op. 25, No. 1 (Chopin).
- D.B.739 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Vladimir de Pachmann (piano): *Impromptu in F sharp major*, Op. 36, No. 2, and *Nocturne in B major*, Op. 32, No. 1 (Chopin).

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- D.1005 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Landon Ronald: *Le Nozze de Figaro Overture* and *Minuet and Trio, Divertimento* (Mozart).
- D.1003 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Edna Thornton (contralto), with piano acc.: *Bantry Bay* and *Love's Old Sweet Song* (Molloy).
- D.1004 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Gresham Singers (male quartet), unacc.: *London Town* (Edward German) and *Heartache* (Max Reger).
- B.2042 (10in., 3s.).—Una Bourne (piano): *Waltz, Op. 40, No. 9*, and *Humoresque, Op. 10, No. 2* (Tchaikovsky).
- B.2043 (10in., 3s.).—Sydney Coltham (tenor): *The Faithful Heart* (R. Quirke) and *My Lute* (Liddle).
- B.2050 (10in., 3s.).—Nitza Codolban (Zimbalist): *Russian Gipsy Air* (traditional) and *Roumanian Gipsy Air* (traditional).
- C.1210 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—The New Light Symphony Orchestra: *Malagueña, A Spanish Dance* (Moszkowski) and *Rustic Wedding Symphony, Intermezzo (Bridal Song)* (Goldmark).

With the exception that the turn in *Feldeinsamkeit* is sung too quickly there can be nothing but praise for Mr. McCormack's interpretation of Brahms' two lovely songs. His breath control is wonderful, yet every singer should be able to acquire the power of long phrasing, a first essential for good *lieder* singing.

Amneris, one of opera's chief "cats," tells Aida with a pretence of pity, but every sign of malicious delight, that her countryfolk have suffered a heavy defeat—news which naturally upsets Aida very considerably. Tina Poli-Randacio seems to have improved her recording out of knowledge. Her previous efforts were rather painful. She sings the music with confident ease and gets very rich tone into her lowest register. An artist unknown to me, Maartje Offers, sings capably as Amneris.

I am not clear as to why Cortôt should record a piano transcription of Brahms' well-known *Wiegenlied* when so many of the master's beautiful intermezzos (that cradle-song-like one in E flat, for instance) go unrecorded. Needless to say the A flat study is charmingly played, though the piano tone on both sides is only fair.

It was bound to come, and here it is: Pachmann playing and talking through the *B major Nocturne*; unintelligibly for the most part—I heard "he cry"—but still, talking! Joking apart, the record is indeed a marvellous one. Consider the old man's age and then listen to this masterly playing; masterly from every point of view. It is a perfect lesson in phrasing, *rubato*, control, part playing—all the innumerable details that go to make up the art of interpretation. The one drawback is the clanginess of the piano tone about the middle of the piano. Perhaps a large soundbox and fibre would obviate it.

A welcome but long overdue re-recording of the *Overture to the Marriage of Figaro* has at last been issued and proves worth waiting for; though the playing is a little rough in parts and the violins produce rather screaming tone on their E-strings. The brass are excellent, but the flutes could have done with more prominence. The reverse is a wholly delightful *Minuet and Trio* from, I think, the seventeenth of the *Divertimenti*, which is well known as a piano solo (*Minuet Célèbre*), arranged by Palmgren and as a violin solo. Una Bourne has recorded the piano version.

Edna Thornton wastes a flood of lovely tone and twelve inches of record on two of Molloy's sentimentalities which one would have thought the public had long ago outgrown. When will our singers be a little more courageous in their choice of material? *Heartache* is an optimistic description of the internal agonies Reger's part song gave me; it shows this composer at his dullest and worst. By comparison *London Town* at once induces that Kruschen feeling; but, in any case, it is a jolly piece of writing!

Una Bourne plays in exhilarating fashion Tchaikovsky's well-known *Humoresque* and a rather unrhythmical waltz by the same composer. The piano tone is excellent. *My lute* is a well-constructed, pleasant song well given, though with too much effort, by Sydney Coltham; the reverse is on familiar lines.

A zimbalon is a large kind of dulcimer with a compass of about four octaves, standing on four legs. It is very popular among the gipsies in Hungary. One could not, of course, listen to an instrument so limited in tone-colour for very long but it is very pleasant for the length of a ten-inch record, playing music exactly suited to its genius, and it reproduces as well as anything could.

Goldmark is rarely anything but a skilful imitator, but his *Bridal Song* would have been enjoyable were it half the length it is. The continual bursts of *fortissimos* followed by double *pianos* soon grow tiresome. The *Malagueña*, a dance with a captivating rhythm, comes out very well; indeed the recording in both cases is first rate; very full and round.

N. P.

PARLOPHONE

(August Issues.)

- E.10334 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Opera House Orchestra conducted by Siegfried Wagner: *The Flying Dutchman Overture* (Wagner). (G. and T.) Parts 1 and 2.
- E.10335 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Opera House Orchestra conducted by Siegfried Wagner: *Overture, Part 3*, and *Introduction to Act 2* and *Spinning Chorus* from *The Flying Dutchman* (Wagner).
- E.10336 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Opera House Orchestra conducted by Dr. Weissmann: *Roman Carnival Overture* (Berlioz). (G. and T.)
- E.10337 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Opera House Orchestra conducted by Dr. Weissmann: *Namensfeier Overture* (Beethoven). (G. and T.)
- E.10340 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Edith Lorand Orchestra: *Fantasia on Verdi's La Traviata*.
- E.10341 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Emmy Bettendorf (soprano): *Monologue der Marschallin, Kann mich auch an ein Madel erinnern*—from *Der Rosenkavalier* (Strauss).

Wagner often dramatised his own experiences and emotions. The *Flying Dutchman's* redemption is a sublimation of Richard Wagner's desire (at one time) for redemption. On the more obvious plane too, there is in this stirring overture a background of personal experience. Wagner was in his early days living in Russia—at Riga, where he chanced upon the legend of the skipper van der Decken, who swore he would not give up his attempt to round the Cape if he had to stick at it till the day of doom. There does not seem to be anything very horrible about the sailor's plucky attempt; but the legend-maker sees trouble in the most harmless things, and so we have the tale of the devil's taking the honest fellow at his word, and making him sail the seas for ever. Stay! There is one gleam of hope—if he can find a woman whose love is faithful through all he shall be redeemed. Every seven years he is graciously permitted to come to land and seek her. In Senta she is found. (Senta's ballad in the second act was, said Wagner, the germ of the whole work). The personal experience that inspired the overture was Wagner's voyage to England, during which he encountered terrific storms, and was driven on the Norwegian coast. The overture gives us the cumulative force of the waves and the sting of the lashing spray. It is one of the best pieces of "sea music" we have.

The two leading themes of the work are the Curse and the Dutchman's weariness—heard at the start of the overture; and the Senta theme—Redemption—the gently-flowing melody of wonderful contrast in its comfort (at bar 65). Later on the chorus of sailors comes in (bar 203), introduced by four bars of clarinet shakes, 'cellos running up the scale beneath them. (The chorus has a repeated figure of triplets in its second phrase.)

The germ of the chorus in Act II. is contained in the refrain of Senta's ballad. The maidens are spinning (the music gives us, in an undercurrent, the suggestion of their wheels), while Senta sits abstractedly gazing at the picture of the Dutchman. Only the orchestral part is given; the voices are not heard. This is artless, charming work, that may usefully be compared with the later choral music of *The Ring*—the Rhine Maidens' Song, for example.

The recording is discreet. We never have mere noise in the overture, and yet a good deal of the seascape is conveyed. The wood-wind, the least bit "woolly" in a *p*, comes out pretty well in louder work. The brass at the beginning seems rather overcast—tenuous, but I find it on the whole adequate in the massed weight of the wilder music. The overture is given in full. I think I care for this recording as much as for those of the other companies. It has not quite the fury of the Columbia version (which is cut), but, from memory, I should say that its tone is as good as that of the old H.M.V.


Berlioz's epitome of the spirit of the carnival contains a delightful *cor anglais* solo, soon after the start. This serves as introduction, and after the tune has been repeated in imitation, with a rather "jazzy" accompaniment, and been rounded off with a little more mellifluous harmony, the carnival prank proper begins, heralded by those wood-wind skirls at the end of Side 1. There is here a cut, from the last bars of page 15 (miniature score) to the middle of page 27. I find the tone on pages 52-54 rather weak, somehow, and the last few pages better. I am not at all persuaded that any gramophone can register the full tonal value of so

"The House for Miniature Scores"

About Miniature Scores

THE following hints and explanations will be of use to those listening to a Gramophone record of a String Quartet while following the music in the *Miniature Score*.


The instruments combining to make a String Quartet are First Violin, Second Violin, Viola and Violoncello. The Violin has four strings, tuned in fifths,

thus: 

Scale passages, chords, double notes and repeated notes are practicable on the Violin; the same applies to the Viola and Violoncello. In the *Miniature Score* numerous terms will be found which, to the beginner, will need explanation.

For instance, *tremolo* or *trem.*, a succession of notes

to be played as fast as possible,  or



, also *con sordini* or *muted*, which means that little wooden instruments are placed on the bridge of the Violin, to deaden the sound and to produce a thin veiled tone which is easily distinguished when once heard. The removal of the mute is signified by the words *senza sordini*.

Sometimes, instead of using the bow the player plucks the strings with the tip of the first or second finger of the right hand. This action is named *pizzicato*, or, abbreviated *pizz.* Passages which are very rapid cannot be played in this manner. The resumption of the use of the bow is indicated by the words *col arco* or *arco*.



Another expression in constant use is *Sul A*, *Sul G*, etc., which means that the passage so marked must be played on the A or G string, etc.

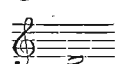

The mark *8va* written over one or a series of notes means that the note or passage is to be played an octave higher than written. The intention is to obviate the printing of numerous ledger lines which always tend, more or less, to confuse the player. *8va basso* means the contrary, i.e., the notes to be played an octave lower than written.

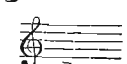
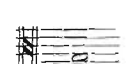
The *Viola* (called in English the "Tenor," in French "Alto," and in German "Bratsche") is really a large Violin. It has four strings tuned in fifths, and a perfect fifth lower than those of the Violin, thus,

. Therefore, the note  on the


Violin is written  on the Viola;



 on the Violin,  on the Viola;

 on the Violin,  on the Viola;

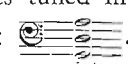
and,  on the Violin,  on the

Viola. The lowest note on the Viola, i.e.,

C , is of course not on the Violin, but

represents , or , an octave lower.

8va basso.

The *Violoncello* has four strings like the other instruments tuned in fifths, an octave lower than the Viola: .

All that has been said regarding double notes, *tremolo*, *pizzicato*, etc., applies to all the strings. Mutes are occasionally used for the Violoncello, but less frequently than for Violins or Violas.

Perhaps the best method to become acquainted with a String Quartet before endeavouring to follow a Gramophone record with *Miniature Score*, is to play it over in a Pianoforte arrangement for two hands comparing it with the score at the same time. The amateur can then compare the "tout ensemble" with the distribution of the music to the various instruments, and will be able to pick out the tunes at will.

As a general rule, the classical String Quartet was in four separate movements, with a break between each one, Introduction and Allegro, Slow Movement, Scherzo and Finale (Rondo, etc.), but this form is quite arbitrary and never adhered to strictly even by the old Masters. A Quartet in one movement is quite in fashion to-day, the whole work being played without a break, though there may be many different changes of time and speed throughout.

The early Quartets of Haydn will be found to consist more or less of an important First Violin part, the other instruments acting merely as accompaniment. But Mozart, and, later on, Beethoven, altered that and made each instrument play a distinctive part, indispensable to the ensemble. It is in these later works that the Gramophone listener will find the *Miniature Score* to be of the utmost value.

Goodwin & Tabb (1924) Ltd.,
34, Percy Street, London, W.1.

ADVT.
(To be continued.)

brilliant an overture, so I do not at present expect too much. This record, then, seems to me a worthy and reasonably effective attempt to do what can be done to convey the spirit of the music.

Beethoven was at the height of his glory in 1814, when the "Name Day" Overture was written. The seventh and eighth symphonies had come triumphantly forth, his only opera *Fidelio* had been successfully revived after some years' silence, and all was at its brightest. This overture had been in mind for half a dozen years, and *Grove* tells us that its themes had been sketched out in the first place as part of the *Hymn to Joy* that finally found its place in the *Ninth Symphony*. It was finished on the "name-day" of the Emperor of Austria, and its title was just a compliment. It has no "programme" significance. Someone, without the composer's sanction called it a "Hunting" overture—a plausible title, probably as good as any other, but certainly not Beethoven's.

The overture has a *Maestoso* introduction, after a favourite manner of the composer. This broad and gracious portion gives place to a dancing theme, with a little snapping figure of two notes followed by a short rest, that will be heard during its development a good deal. The second strain of the subject, smoother in style, that comes at its fifth bar, is "imitated," various instruments entering with it one after another. At the fifty-fifth bar of this quick section the second main theme comes in (oboes and bassoons). Its three-note motif will be recognised as derived from the fifth bar of the *Allegro*. On these two tunes the work is founded. It is full of life, joyous, and clear. The orchestra does it good justice. The lower strings might have had a trifle more bite; but it is pleasant to be able to follow them. They do not fade away altogether.

The first air in the Verdi *Fantasia* is Alfred's drinking song (*Let us quaff from the wine-cup*). The third is the celebrated *Ah, fors è lui*, well played, with a delicate use of *portamento*. This is a really expressive piece of work, and shows as well as any air Verdi ever wrote the capacity of the old-fashioned melody. Note its delicate accompaniment. The air on the latter part of the second side (after the recitative) is that in which Alfred and Violetta (who is now dying) indulge their pathetic hope of fleeing together from Paris.

These extracts are tuneful, and are neatly set forth. Yet, surveying this early work of Verdi, I feel that it (and many more operas of his unregenerate days) could more properly be called "triviale." They are small things, compared with the great *Othello* and the adorable *Falstaff*. Will our Parlophone friends give us one or two lengthier extracts from these? I remember their charming little *Falstaff* song, *Sul fil d'un soffio etesio*, a while ago. That excellent final fugue might be tried. Only *Falstaff's* *When I was a page* has been done by other recorders, I fancy—though I speak from memory only.

The exquisite *Rose Cavalier* music is happily treated by Emmy Bettendorf, whose voice has the right maturity and amorousness in it. The Princess has decided to send Octavian as the Knight of the Rose to Sophie, the daughter of the wealthy Fainal, by whom Baron Ochs is attracted. When Octavian has gone she reflects that she is not so young as she used to be, and fears she may lose the handsome boy's affections. Is there not the whole of sweet yet sadness-tinged reflection in the last half of the second side of the disc? Apart altogether from its subject, the music is exceedingly lovely, and it is uncommonly well played here.

K. K.

VOCALION

(July issues.)

A.0235 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—Vladimir Rosing (tenor), with piano acc. by Frank St. Leger: *Death's Serenade* and *Trepak* from *The Death Cycle* (Moussorgsky).

K.05176 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Horace Stevens (bass-baritone), with the Aeolian Orchestra: *Hiawatha's Vision* from *Hiawatha* (Coleridge-Taylor) and *The Pipes of Pan* (Elgar).

X.9580 (10in., 3s.).—Roy Henderson (baritone), with piano acc. by Stanley Chapple: *Don Juan's Serenade* (Tchaikovsky), and *Air de Ralph* from *La Jolie Fille de Perth* (Bizet).

X.9582 (10in., 3s.).—Howard Bliss ('cello), with piano acc. by M. O. Marshall: *Siciliano* (Locatelli, arr. De Swert), and *Allegro Spiritoso* (Senailé, arr. Salmon).

K.05177 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Adila Fachiri and Jelly d'Aranyi, with piano acc. by Ethel Hobday: *The Golden Sonata, Parts 1 and 2* (Purcell, arr. Moffat).

K.05179 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—The Regent Symphony Orchestra: *Othello Suite (Selection), Parts 1 and 2* (Coleridge-Taylor).

Two of Moussorgsky's grim *Songs and Dances of Death*, issued before as single-sided records, are here coupled together, both being sung by Rosing. The first has a "programme" not unlike that of Schubert's *Death and the Maiden*. Death comes to a dying girl as a beautiful youth and woos her, offering his most precious possession. She surrenders to him and the song ends with his terrific cry "Thou art mine!" As Mr. Nathan has said, "the diminishing tonic pedal, the awful silence, the last chord of exultation succeeding it, produce an effect which causes the heart to stand still." The Russian dance, the *Trepak*, provides the background for the next song. An old drunk peasant is going home at night through the forest; a blizzard rages round him. Death comes and dances the "Trepak" with the old man until, exhausted, he lies down in the snow with his grim partner chanting a lullaby over him. These magnificent pieces of realism finely interpreted by M. Rosing, should not be missed by anyone who cares for the art of song.

A badly-balanced orchestral accompaniment takes away much of the pleasure that Mr. Stevens' excellent singing of *Hiawatha's Vision* might have given us. There is an undoubted charm about this music and one would be glad of a record of the baritone solo from the best part of the cantata, *The Death of Minnehaha*. The accompaniment to the Elgar song is much better done. Song-writing is far from being this composer's strong point, but this is one of his more successful examples. It is very well sung. Roy Henderson is talked of on all sides as a "coming" singer, so his records are of considerable interest. *Don Juan's Serenade* is well suited to the singer's virile tones, though the lowest notes lack power. Mr. Henderson's diction is not impeccable yet; he broadens his vowels a little too much here and there, but there is no doubt that he is a considerable artist and he seems to understand how to get light and shade into his singing. Stanley Chapple's accompanying is excellent.

Howard Bliss provides some pleasant musicianly playing in two eighteenth century pieces.

Somehow the d'Aranyi Sisters' records are always a little bit disappointing. One knows how wonderful they are on the concert platform, but, as recorded, there is, now and again, a decided hardness of tone which detracts attention from the lovely phrasing, and feeling for the music that are indubitably there.

Incidental music to a play is usually pretty thin stuff and the *Othello Suite* is no exception. The *Willow Song* (on Part 2) awakes a comic reminiscence of the *Mikado*. The recording is good.

N. P.

(August issues.)

X.9595 (10in., 3s.).—Frank Titterton (tenor), with piano acc.: *Turn ye to me* (old Highland rowing tune, traditional) and *Jenny's Mantle* (old Welsh air) from *Songs of Four Nations* (arr. A. Somervell).

X.9596 (10in., 3s.).—Constance Willis (contralto) with piano acc. by Stanley Chapple: *Gipsies* (Graham Peel) and *The Monkey's Carol* (C. V. Stanford).

X.9597 (10in., 3s.).—Watcyn Watcyns (bass-baritone), with piano acc. by Stanley Chapple: *West Country Lad* from *Tom Jones* (Ed. German), and *The Pibroch*, from *Songs of a Roving Celt* (C. V. Stanford).

X.9598 (10in., 3s.).—York Bowen (pianoforte): *Capriccio in B minor, Op. 76, No. 2* (Brahms), and *The Way to Polden* (an ambling tune), *Op. 76* (Bowen).

X.9599 (10in., 3s.).—John Amadio (flute), with piano acc. by Ivor Newton: *The Remembrance, Op. 10* (Tschak), and *Ungarische Fantasie* (Büchner).

K.05181 (10in., 3s.).—The Modern Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Stanley Chapple: *A Song before Sunrise* and *On hearing the first Cuckoo in Spring* (Delius).

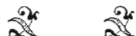
It is with real pleasure that I welcome Mr. Titterton's artistic singing of two folk songs in which he successfully avoids all the errors that lay in wait for the unwary. His tone is consistently pleasant, his diction and sense of rhythm excellent, and I can only hope he will build up a large repertoire of these lovely old songs. A word of praise also for the well-played piano accompaniment.

Miss Willis may be complimented without reserve for her choice of Graham Peel's enchanting *Gipsies*, which she phrases in a manner to which Mr. Plunket Greene, whose vials of wrath are poured out upon contraltos, could not take exception, and for Stanford's pathetic little *Monkey's Carol*. There is not a suspicion of "hoot" in Miss Willis' even tones and I hope she, also, will record many of our best English songs ancient and modern.

The Pibroch with its impressive ending—for it calls the wanderer to eternal rest—is a fine example for Stanford's art. Both it and German's rollicking *West Country Lad* are well sung by Mr. Watcyns. Once again my benediction on these three artists and their accompanist. Mr. Bowen plays his own delightful "ambling tune" with excellent tone and gives us a badly-needed modern recording of a well-known Brahms' *Capriccio*. There is very little good solo music for the flute, but those who want to hear the instrument played in masterly manner and can overlook the poverty of the material will do well to purchase Amadio's record. Needless to say the flute records exceptionally well.

Having given Mr. Chapple my benediction in his rôle of accompanist, I must now, perforce, turn and rend him when he takes up the conductor's baton. Can this hurried, jerky, unbalanced noise be, indeed, the music of one of Delius' most exquisite cameos, *On hearing the first Cuckoo in Spring*? There are, it is true, no "cuts," but it is small compensation to have every note when all the beauty, the romantic mystery, of this most delicate music is squeezed out. *A Song before Sunrise* is better, but far from being Delius. The idea of the "Modern Chamber Orchestra" is excellent, but it does not seem yet to have got beyond an idea.

N. P.



DANCE NOTES

By Richard Herbert

THE statistics of the dance records issued this month certainly support the theory of a writer in *The Observer* of June 28th, who says: "The foxtrot is merely the dance expression of jazz music—or 'symphonic syncopation' as the new dance bands call it." The waltz, which has made strenuous efforts to hold its own with the fox-trot as a very feeble partner, seems now to have reached its last dying gasp. While there are 94 new fox-trots, there are only seven waltzes and three one-steps. Furthermore, what waltzes there are compare poorly with those we have heard during recent months.

The high quality of the fox-trots is a little embarrassing, as it is difficult to decide what to leave out. The best for tunefulness and sheer artistry is another adaptation from the Indian love lyrics—*Temple Bells* with *Bouquet* on the other side, both played by Jack Hylton (H.M.V. B.2030, 10in., 3s.). The former is notable for its mellow tones, its pulsating accompaniment and its seductive melody. *Bouquet* is a good foil, but a tune with less individuality. The record played by the Meyer Davis Le Paradis Band is a treat of a very different kind—*Let it rain, let it pour* and *All aboard for Heaven* (H.M.V. B.2039, 10in., 3s.). I think it would be true to say that this combination of instruments is quite the most intriguing that I have ever heard. Here is the American method brought to perfection—of the vocal chorus I will say nothing. The Columbia Company issues four of George Gershwin's tunes from "Tell me more." They are already to be heard nearly everywhere, and they deserve their success—*My fair lady* and *Tell me more*, both played by Percival Mackey's Band (3695, 10in., 3s.), and *Kickin' the clouds away* and *Why do I love you?* both by the Denza Band (3694, 10in., 3s.). *Tell me more* is the best tune of the four, melodious but catchy, but 3694 is the more interesting record. So good is the recording that it seems that the band simply must be in the room in order to produce this marvellous volume of pure sound. No record could be better for the gramophone dance, as the music seems to penetrate to every corner of the room. Other specially good Columbia records are *Let it rain, let it pour* and *In a little love boat*, also by the Denza Band (3675, 10in., 3s.). In this case the recording seems to be even better, if that is possible, tone being almost perfect—and *Hullo 'Tucky* and *Nile Night*, both played by the Hannan Band (3664, 10in., 3s.). *Nile Night* is a tune that never really caught popular fancy. Perhaps it will now; this is a good record and may bring it fame. In playing over the Brunswick records I could not help being struck by the complete efficiency of the American bands; but they

are all very similar to each other, except when violently eccentric, and, in consequence, a little monotonous. Most of these records are good, and all have a big volume of sound. The one that strikes me most is *By the lake* and *Nobody knows what a red-head mamma can do*, both played by Ray Miller and his orchestra (2778, 10in., 3s.). It is difficult to wish for a better record of *By the lake*, a tune that has not received the attention it deserves. It has a beautiful melody, and is played with fine rhythm. *Something tells me that one is you* and *Could you care for me*, both played by Abe Lyman, is another good record from the same company (2796, 10in., 3s.). H.M.V. fare is again an *embarras de richesse*, and I have not room to comment individually even on all the deserving records. The following are the pick of the bunch: *Poor little rich girl*, from "On with the Dance," and *Blue evening blues* (H.M.V. B.2035, 10in., 3s.—Savoy Orpheans); *Two eyes and Tell me, pretty maiden* (H.M.V. B.2028, 10in., 3s.—Savoy Orpheans); *I like you best of all* (Savoy Havana Band) and *Madeira* (Savoy Orpheans)—the best record of this tune (H.M.V. B.2032, 10in., 3s.); *Let it rain* (International Novelty Orchestra) and *Remember* (Jean Goldkette and his orchestra) (H.M.V. B.2037, 10in., 3s.). The *Vocalions*, too, reach a very high level; they have good tone and there is very little surface noise. Again it is difficult to choose without doing an injustice to those left out. *China girl* and *No wonder* is perhaps the best (Voc. X.9588, 10in., 3s.). The former tune, which with its ingenious and insinuating effects is played very nearly as well by the Hannan Band (Col. 3666, 10in., 3s.), is played in this instance by Austin Wylie's Golden Pheasant Orchestra; the latter by Ben Selvin in his very best style. *Florida* (The Tuxedo Orchestra)—best record of the tune—and *That's my girl* (The Ambassadors) is another record worth buying (Voc. X.9587, 10in., 3s.). Jeffries' Rialto Orchestra is still pre-eminent for its vocal chorus and *Tell all the world*—from "P's and Q's"—and *That means nothing to me*—another number from "On with the Dance"—is a good example (Aco. G.15708, 10in., 2s. 6d.). The Romaine Dance Orchestra excels itself with its mellow tones and beautifully restrained playing in *The only, only one for me* and *Rose of the moonlight* (2s. Col., 10in., 2581, Zonophone), and thus the alphabet ends.

Collectively, as I have said before, the waltzes are a poor lot, and there is only one that is really first-class—*Les millions d'harlequin* and *June brought the roses*, both played by the Hannan Band (Col. 3668, 10in., 3s.). Both these tunes are absorbingly rhythmical, quite entrancing, and played moderately slowly. There are two records of *When you and I were waltzing* to remind one of Vincent Lopez' effort last month, but neither quite reaches his perfection, although Imperial 1455, 10in., 2s., played by Ben Selvin, is more than excellent value for the money. The other record of the same tune is Voc. 9601, 10in., 3s., played by the Miami Marimba Band, so there is plenty of contrast.

The Romaine Orchestra supplies the only one-step record worth mentioning and occupies both sides of the record in playing *Savoy English Medley*, Parts I and II. Our languishing memories of the blues are revived by a tune issued as a fox-trot but having "blues" as part of its name, and certainly played in blues time—*Beale Street Blues*. This is as rhythmical as it could possibly be, and is an absolute invitation to perform antics. We must thank Herb Wiedoeft's Cinderella Roof Orchestra for our belated good fun and for his exhibition of non-cacophonous stunting. *Maple leaf rag* is the tune on the other side (Brunswick 2795, 10in., 3s.).

The records included in the list that follows arrived too late for detailed criticism, but an attempt has been made to indicate the best by means of denser type and asterisks. All are fox-trots, unless otherwise mentioned.

BELTONE (10in., 2s. 6d.).

791.—*The Toy Drum Major* and *Seminola* (by the Avenue Dance Orchestra).

792.—*Tell all the world* and *The melody that made you mine* (waltz) (by the Premier Dance Orchestra).

793.—*That means nothing to me* and *San Francisco* (by the Premier Dance Orchestra).

COLUMBIA (10in., 3s.).

3580.—*Back where the daffodils grow* and *The Golden West* (waltz) (by the Savoy Havana Band).

3676.—*A message from Missouri* and *I'm in love with you, my love* (waltz) (by the New Princes Toronto Band).

3677.—*Keep smiling at trouble* and *Your kiss told me* (waltz) (by the New Princes Toronto Band).

- 3678.—*Maggie McGhee* (waltz) and *The Toy Drum Major* (by Percival Mackey's Band).
 3679.—*Did Tosti raise his bowler hat* (When he said "Good-bye") and *Oh, Darling! Do say yes!* (by Percival Mackey's Band).
 3687.—*Bouquet* and *Who takes care of the caretaker's daughter* (by Percival Mackey's Band).
 3688.—*Maybe you will, maybe you won't* and *From now on* (by the Hannan Dance Band).
 3689.—*Swanee Butterfly* and *The melody that made you mine* (waltz) (by the Hannan Dance Band).
 3690.—*O, Katharina* (by Ted Lewis and his Band) and *Titina* (by the Hannan Dance Band).
 3697.—*Poor little rich girl* and *Couldn't we keep on dancing* (by the New Princes Toronto Band).
 3698.—*Hong Kong dream girl* and *Waitin' for the moon* (by the Denza Dance Band).
 3699.—*Indian dawn* and *Joanna* (by the Denza Dance Band).
 3701.—*One little one more* and *Nonni* (by the New Princes Toronto Band).
 3702.—*Oh! how I miss you to-night* and *I've found my sweetheart Sally* (by the Hannan Dance Band) (both waltzes).
 3703.—*Don't bring Lulu* and *Hot Miss Molly* (by the Gilt Edged Four).
 3704.—*Best black* and *My sugar* (by the Gilt Edged Four).

H.M.V. (10in., 3s.).

- B.2051.—*From now on* and *Maybe you will, maybe you won't* (by Jack Hylton's Kit-Cat Band).
 B.2052.—*Seminola* and *Florida* (by the Savoy Orpheans).
 B.2053.—*Why do I love you?* and *Tell me more* (by the Savoy Orpheans).
 B.2054.—*Whoa! Nellie* and *Pozzo* (by Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra).
 B.2055.—*Just a little drink* and *Ah-Ha!* (by Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra).
 B.2056.—*Yearning* and *Who* (by Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).
 B.2057.—(a) *My old Kentucky home*, (b) *Carry me back to old Virginia*, (c) *Dear old Southland* and (a) *Swanee River*, (b) *Mussa's in de cold, cold ground* (by the Savoy Havana Band).
 B.2059.—*You're so near, and yet so far* and *No one to love* (by Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).
 B.2060.—*Look at those eyes* and *Does my sweetie do—and how?* (by Waring's Pennsylvanians).
 B.2061.—*Desert Isle* (by Edwin J. McEnelly's Orchestra) and *Who takes care of the caretaker's daughter?* (by Whitey Kaufman's Original Pennsylvania Serenaders).
 B.2063.—*The farmer took another load away*, *Hay! Hay!* and *Pango Pango Maid* (by Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).
 B.2064.—*No wonder (That I love you)* and *Isn't she the sweetest thing* (by Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).
 B.2065.—*Did Tosti raise his bowler hat?* and *My fair lady* (by the Savoy Havana Band).
 B.2066.—*Midnight* (waltz) and *"Der Rosenkavalier"* (waltz) (by the Savoy Havana Band).
 B.2067.—*We're back together again (My baby and me)* and *Tell all the world (I love you)* (by Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).

PARLOPHONE (10in., 2s. 6d.).

- E.5388.—*Sing Hoo* and *Why do I love you?* (by Vincent Lopez and his Orchestra).
 E.5389.—*Ah-Ha!* (by the Red Hotlers) and *If you knew Susie* (by the Melody Sheiks).
 E.5390.—*Joanna* and *The midnight waltz* (by Joe Smith's Club Orchestra).
 E.5391.—*Marie, Marie, Marie* and *Let it rain, let it pour* (by the Red Hotlers).
 E.5393.—*Artist's life* and *Roses of the South* (both waltzes) (by the Edith Lorand Orchestra).
 E.10339 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*In Hawaii* (one-step) and *In old Vienna* (by Marek Weber and his Orchestra).

ZONOPHONE (10in., 2s. 6d.).

- 2593.—*The Toy Drum Major* and *At the end of the road* (by the Romaine Dance Orchestra).

Miscellaneous Reviews

- COLUMBIA.—3684 (10in., 3s.).—The Trix Sisters with piano acc.: *When you go away* and *We don't give a darn about nothing*.
 COLUMBIA.—3685 (10in., 3s.).—The Trix Sisters with piano acc.: *Sweetie do*, and *Helen Trix: No one dances like my man*.
 COLUMBIA.—3686 (10in., 3s.).—The Trix Sisters with banjoline acc.: *Trix's Boodle-um-Bo*, and *Helen Trix: Desperate Blues*.
 COLUMBIA.—3707 (10in., 3s.).—Virginia Dean and Frank Stockland: *Tell Me More* and *My Fair Lady* from *Tell Me More*.
 COLUMBIA.—3706 (10in., 3s.).—Binnie Hale and Harry Glen: *Kickin' the clouds away* and *Why do I love you?* from *Tell Me More*.
 COLUMBIA.—9047 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—The 1925 Orchestra: *Tell Me More* selection.
 H.M.V.—B.2025 (10in., 3s.).—De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra: *I Love the Moon waltz* and *I know of two bright eyes*.
 H.M.V.—B.2027 (10in., 3s.).—Liam Walsh (Irish bagpipes): *Spillans the Fiddler* and (a) *Jackson's Morning Brush*, (b) *Delaney's Drummers*, (c) *The Rambling Pibroch*.
 H.M.V.—B.2033 (10in., 3s.).—The Salon Orchestra: *Serenade* (Toselli) and *La Paloma* (Yradier).
 H.M.V.—C.1203 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Alfred Lester: *Stop me if you've heard it before* and *Lolita*.
 H.M.V.—C.1204 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Ben Lawes: *In the pirate days of old* and *When the Romans conquered Britain*.
 PARLOPHONE.—E.5392 (10in., 3s.).—Edith Lorand: *A Woman's Heart* and *Egyptian March* from *Cleopatra*.
 PARLOPHONE.—E.10338 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Marek Weber and his Orchestra: *All Alone*, waltz, and *A Woman's Heart* from *Cleopatra*.
 PARLOPHONE.—E.10342 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—George Baker (baritone): *Star of my Soul* from *The Geisha* and *Queen of my Heart* from *Dorothy*.
 VOCALION.—X.9583 (10in., 3s.).—Valdenie and his Orchestra: *Idylle Passionelle* and *En Sourdine*.
 VOCALION.—X.9600 (10in., 3s.).—Ferrera and Franchini: *Hawaiian Love Nest* and *Can you bring back the heart I gave you*.
 VOCALION.—K.05170 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Alfred Cammeyer (vibrante zither banjo): *The Gypsy Queen* and *Caprice Accidental*.
 BRUNSWICK.—2803 (10in., 3s.).—Nick Lucas (voice and guitar): *Somebody like you* and *Because they all love you*.
 ZONOPHONE.—A.293 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Browning Mummery (tenor): *The Legend of Kleinsack* and *When love is but tender and sweet* from *Tales of Hoffmann* (Offenbach).
 ZONOPHONE.—A.292 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Royal Cremona Orchestra: (a) *Danse Arabe*, (b) *Danse des Mirlitons* and *Valse des Fleurs* from *Casse-Noisette Suite* (Tchaikovsky).
 BELTONE.—5018 (12in., 4s.).—Margaret F. Thorpe (soprano) and Herbert Thorpe (tenor) with orch. acc.: *Finale Act I* from *Madame Butterfly* (Puccini) and *Miserere* from *Trovatore* (Verdi).

The Trix Sisters are rather betrayed by the gramophone; these records are pleasant enough as reminders of them, but if you have never seen them on the stage you will find the rubbish of the songs—when you can hear the words—rather trying. I mean by this that I do not recommend these records except to admirers already captured. But 3686 is easily the best of the three. *Boodle-um-Bo* is great fun.

The deluge of *Tell Me More* records has begun. George Gershwin's music is very dainty and jolly, and Columbia has done well to get Miss Hale, fresh from the *No, No, Nanette* successes, to record some of the songs; but Mr. Harry Glen's accent is not worthy of her. I advise 3706 and the selection on 9047, the latter a good, if rather strident, version of all the good tunes.

The Edith Lorand version of Toselli's *Serenade* on Parlophone is such a favourite of mine—and probably of most people—that it cannot be ousted by the Salon Orchestra or anyone else. But B.2025 is an excellent 3s. worth, and both the *Serenade* and *La*

Paloma are so good that I should be sorry not to have the record. Just the thing for summer evenings on the river.

I am not fit to appreciate the Irish bagpipes, but willing to believe that Mr. Liam Walsh is the master of his craft. Good luck to him and his followers!

Emphatically not De Groot this month. Clutsam and Paul Rubens (in his fruitiest mood) are too much of a good thing on one record; and one can almost hear the tears of yearning drip into the recording horn.

Thank goodness we can still enjoy the humour of Alfred Lester, and remind ourselves of his *Lolita*. This must rank as one of his best records, but *Stop me if you've heard it before* is poor stuff. So are the two songs and patter of Ben Lawes, who has the power to irritate me even on a record. But his diction is excellent, and he is a great favourite, I'm told, on the wireless.

Miss Edith Lorand, who is in England at this moment, has had better things than *Cleopatra* to play, and until you have all the rest of her fascinating records I should not urge you to buy this. But it has all the skill and crispness of the others.

On the other hand, Marek Weber makes me modify my opinion of the *Cleopatra* music. He really is a marvel, and must share the honours of giving the perfect version of *All Alone* with Melville Gideon on Vocalion.

George Baker is extremely popular, and everyone is glad to hear that he has recovered from his serious motoring accident in Australia. Presumably this record is an old one, and it is of two old songs which many of us will like to keep fresh in memory.

Valdenie and his Orchestra are on rather ordinary lines, and the first violin too often content to be on the edge of a note; and Ferrera and Franchini are much as usual in their record this month. I fancy that this will prove popular with Hawaiian votaries.

Mr. Cammeyer has established his gramophone reputation, and writes music which gives scope to his dexterity with the "vibrante zither banjo." The *Caprice Accidental* is very charming, but it's a charm which might wear off quickly. Banjo, like Russian, music is tiresomely repetitive.

The guitar is put to good use by Nick Lucas to accompany his pleasant, gentle voice; another good record for moonlight on the river. I hope we shall get some more from Brunswick.

The Royal Cremona Orchestra follows up its record of the *Casse-Noisette Suite* (Zono A.290) with Parts 3 and 4 this month, which are not more definitely desirable than the former parts. Capable but quite uninspired. However, these two records contain, I think, the whole suite for 8s. and are not to be despised.

Browning Mummery is splendid in his two songs from the *Tales of Hoffmann*. He is an accomplished recording singer, and this is worthy of him. Adequate records of opera at this price are worth noting.

I cannot entirely recommend the Beltona record; I do not like the tenor and was wishing, while I listened, that Browning Mummery had been singing instead. Miss Thorpe is better and more sympathetic. Still, if you have not got records of these famous duets already, you could not get versions of them, so nearly adequate, at anything like the price. PEPPERING.

Toy Theatres

At least one of our readers has a toy theatre, in which he gives scenes from Wagner operas with the help of gramophone records. There may well be others, and in this connexion we draw attention to the formation of a British Model Theatre Guild. Among the vice-presidents are Mr. G. K. Chesterton, Mr. Pollock, and Mr. Geoffrey Whitworth, the Secretary of the British Drama League. The Guild has models on view in the Palace of Industry at Wembley; and at the Oxford University Extension Summer School is holding a reception in the Faculty of Arts Gallery from Monday, August 24th, to Saturday, August 29th, daily, from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., where, besides an exhibition of models, puppets and toy theatres of all sorts, performances will be given. Anyone interested should write, enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope to the Secretary, Seymour Marks, 65, Hosack Road, S.W. 17.

Book Review

MUSICAL TASTE (and how to form it). By M. D. Calvocoressi. (Oxford University Press, 2/6.)

Books upon various aspects of musical appreciation continue to drop out of the press like hot cakes, presumably to be gobbled up by omnivorous readers. Small as this, one of the latest, is, it raises more questions than can be conveniently answered here; even its sub-title is in some sort a challenge!

It seems to be best, therefore, having regard to the limits of space, to direct criticism mainly upon the fourth chapter of the little book, "How to start and continue," which contains, in relation to the gramophone, a confusion of thought and a lack of understanding curious in a man of Mr. Calvocoressi's intellect. After declaring that the piano-player "is the one form of mechanical assistance that will not exercise a nefarious influence on the education of your taste and especially of your musical ear," the author goes on to quote Mr. Francis Toye to this effect: "all that a child will know is that the Beethoven symphony it hears (on the gramophone) at school does not sound so well as *Kitten on the Keys*, which it listens to at home—with the result that it may, not unnaturally, find more pleasure in the latter. I do myself."

Wireless undergoes a similar condemnation. Now, in the first place, any comparison between wireless and the gramophone goes indubitably in favour of the latter. You have only to listen to a good gramophone record of the piece you have just heard on the wireless to realise how infinitely better the balance, definition of detail, and tone are upon the record.

In the second place Mr. Calvocoressi and Mr. Toye seem to be entirely unaware of the great function of the gramophone in bringing about that cultivation of musical taste which is the thesis of the former's book.

The wholly uninitiated will not, indeed, gain as true an idea from a record of what the orchestra really sounds like as in the concert hall—to state otherwise would be to claim perfection—but will they not be inspired to discover for themselves what the real thing is like and then to make the necessary mental adjustment? Even supposing, however, that this, the usual result, were not so, how is Mr. Calvocoressi's "average person" who desires to start and continue, to do so? His piano technique is rarely of a sufficiently high standard to tackle such a list of music as is set out at the end of this book and if he possesses a piano-player what idea can he get of the orchestra, of song, of chamber music?

The gramophone alone enables the aspiring listener in his own time, in the privacy of his chamber, to advance, unhampered, into the realm of music.

And all this talk of distorted tone! Is Mr. Calvocoressi unaware of how exquisitely, for instance, chamber music is reproduced nowadays? The kernel of the matter is that, used intelligently, with its defects realised and its possibilities understood, the gramophone is second to none as an educative agent, as indeed thousands of people who attained to their love of music through it—and could only have done so this way—will testify.

The little book, apart from this matter, contains much of real value well and freshly expressed. The list of music at the end is exceedingly well done, but it would have been well to have given some of the examples of pure tune their harmonic clothes.

N. P.

A New Nadejin Record

Mr. Nicolai Nadejin, the Russian baritone, looked in on us at the Congress and heard his new record of the *Midnight Review* and *Volga Boat-song* on the gramophone at our stall (V.F. 631). He had come up from Brighton, where he was singing in Mme. Lydia Kyasht's Company, with which he is touring and thrilling new audiences wherever he goes; and lately he has been broadcasting from 2 LO as well, so that the voice about which we have often written in these columns is becoming familiar all over the country to those who can appreciate *bel canto* allied to a Russian temperament, perhaps the most moving combination in the world of song.

CORRESPONDENCE

De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

STRAVINSKY'S *L'OISEAU DE FEU*.*(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)*

DEAR SIR,—You will probably be interested to learn that the H.M.V. issue of Stravinsky's *Fire-Bird* music synchronised with one of the same work by the Victor Co., whose products we get in this far corner of the globe. The records are two 12in. double-sided, of the red label variety, and are by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. In common with all recordings by this brilliant organisation, the records are splendid examples, both as regards interpretation and orchestral tone.

Your correspondent, "N. P.," in the April number of THE GRAMOPHONE, complains that the titles to the H.M.V. records of this work do not correspond very satisfactorily with the plot given in the supplement. You are, at least, better off in this respect than we are with the Victor set, which provides neither supplement or even sub-titles to the records! Whether the suite performed contains the same or other numbers included in the H.M.V. version, I do not know, but I have formed a pretty good idea of the numbers in the American issue, although if it had been another *Petrouchka*, for instance, it would have been an impossible feat without the assistance of a score. The result of my efforts does not, however, seem to coincide with those of "N. P.," who promises everyone genuine pleasure with item No. 3, *Dance of the Princesses*. According to my analysis, the *Dance of the Princesses* is every bit the same language as that employed in the *Dance of the Fire-Bird*, while the only genuine "tunes" seem to be *Entreaties of the Fire-Bird* and the *Berceuse* (a lullaby that "rocks the Tsarevna into a sleep that will protect her from Katschei") which occurs just before the march of Katschei's Infernal Subjects at the conclusion of the piece.

According to my investigation the Victor Co.'s records include the following material: (a) *Introduction, Dance of the Fire-Bird*; (b) *Entreaties of the Fire-Bird*; (c) *Dance of the Princesses*; (d) *Berceuse: Infernal Dance (March) of Katschei's Subjects*.

May I be permitted to furnish the following data? They are supplied in the programme books of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. "Stravinsky in 1919 re-scored this suite to make it more available for an orchestra of ordinary size:—*Wind*: two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, bass tuba. *Percussion*: Cymbals, triangle, xylophone, harp, piano. *Strings*: As usual. The original score called for tambourine, celesta, bells, three harps, and other wind instruments in addition to the above, as well as 16 first violins, 16 second violins, 14 violas, 8 violoncellos, and 6 double basses. Stravinsky also re-arranged and added from material in the original ballet. He retained from the first suite the *Introduction*, the *Dance of the Fire-Bird*, the *Dance of the Princesses*, and *Katschei's Infernal Dance*, but omitted *The Enchanted Garden*, *The Supplications of the Fire-Bird*, and *The Princesses Playing with the Golden Apples*. He added two numbers from the ballet; the *Berceuse* and the *Finale*." *L'Oiseau de Feu* is not, of course, nearly as advanced in style as the later work, *Petrouchka*. At the most it is only fantastic and weird, but charming music withal, full of vitality and descriptiveness.

Montagu-Nathan, in his "History of Russian Music," quotes Ralston's "Russian Folk-Tales," in an attempt to supply a description of the "plot." Ralston explains that the fire bird is known in its native haunts as the "Zhar-Ptitsa." Its name, he says, indicates its close connection with flame or light. Zhar means "glowing heart," as of a furnace, and Zhar Ptitsa means, literally, "the Glow Bird." "Its appearance corresponds with its designation. Its feathers blaze with golden or silvery sheen, its eyes shine like crystal, it dwells in a golden cage. In the depth of the night it flies into a garden and lights it up as brilliantly as could a thousand burning fires. A single feather from its tail illuminates

a dark room. It feeds upon golden apples, which have the power of bestowing youth and beauty, or, according to a Croatian version, on magic grasses."

Katschei is one of the many incarnations of the dark spirit. "Sometimes he is described as altogether serpent-like in form; sometimes he seems to be of a mixed nature, partly human and partly ophidian, but in some stories he is apparently framed after the fashion of a man... He is called "immortal" or "deathless" because of his superiority to the ordinary laws of existence... Sometimes his "death"—that is, the object with which his life is indissolubly connected—does not exist within his body."

Your correspondent's ("N. P.") statement that the *Fire-Bird* music suffers more from being detached from its proper setting—the theatre—than did the later work *Petrouchka*, is surely open to argument. Personally, I think the positions are reversed. *Petrouchka*, apart from the score with its definitely connected indications with the ballet-drama itself, sounds rubbish, but the *Fire-Bird* certainly does not. Most of it is impressionistic dance music—or rather music descriptive of the movement of dance, and the melody of the "Khorovode," to say nothing of the supplicating music of the *Fire-Bird*, is enchanting. Both these items could easily stand alone without "programme" of any kind.

Yours faithfully,

Hong Kong.

H. L. WILSON.

LADIES AND THE GRAMOPHONE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—The letter of "Scrutator" in your June issue, "Where are the Ladies?" raises the question, why the ladies are almost universally opposed or at least indifferent to the finest gramophone music. In my long experience as a dealer in gramophones I have never met with a female gramophone enthusiast. In most instances when a lady is calling with her husband to purchase a machine her interest is in the instrument—as "an article of furniture" only. Its capabilities as a musical instrument are really of little interest to her. I find that the great majority of them simply do not understand tone at all, although they will frequently pretend that they do. They appear really to see no difference between the tone of a hundred guinea machine and one costing 30s. They will keep on talking incessantly when the most perfect records are being played, and one can see that they really do not understand the music at all and do not wish to. The only thing that will interest them slightly is dance music.

Anyone who has observed the ladies at any musical gathering where first-class music was being played must have noticed that almost invariably their interest was, more or less, assumed. It is the same, although to a much greater extent when listening to the gramophone. In their heart most of them simply hate it and are absurdly jealous of their husband's partiality for it. It is the same with wireless—after the novelty has worn off.

No, "Scrutator," ladies are not interested in any sound-boxes, needle-track alignment, or anything like that. They want to be seen and also to see. They don't want to listen. That will never interest them.

Yours faithfully,

Luton.

T. A. F.

PIANOFORTE RECORDING.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Since my last letter on the above subject appeared, we have had no further example of the concerto form upon which either Mr. Mackenzie or myself could sharpen our swords, so that a few more remarks anent those already in existence must suffice. In discussing the tonal balance in the Mendelssohn *Concerto* I was careful to state that it was "practically restored"; that it is entirely so is pre-supposing too much self-satisfaction, but I still think it very fair, perhaps the style of orchestration may have something to do with it.

Mr. Mackenzie mentions among some of the older concerto records those of Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasia* and Grieg's in *A minor*. These two appeared after many years' silence in this class (following the truncated version by Backhaus), and must be considered to some extent as experiments.

It is certainly true, as he says, that the balance in these examples between the orchestra and the solo instrument is better than in some other instances, but both are much louder than in subsequent essays, where it is obvious that there was a general "toning-down," dictated possibly by the pianist's nerves breaking down. At any rate, whether correct or not, we observe in Franck's

Variations, for instance, a much more mellow tone which is also carried through in the *Emperor Concerto*, here played by a different individual, but even here there is a fly in the ointment; the important drum passage on the last side is almost inaudible. At present, something has to go somewhere, but it is certainly an anomaly that the Schumann work, the most expensive of the lot, should fail so lamentably, when Cortot's work with Thibaud in the Franck *Sonata* provides one of the best examples of pianoforte tone ever issued, either individually or in concert. This latter observation does not mean that I have altered my opinion of the Bach *Concerto*, where the style of playing called for is so different, but there ought to be more co-operation all round, so that we should then have more of an actual performance, instead of a few moments snatched (perhaps ?) between cigarettes.

Yours faithfully,

Brixton.

S. F. D. HOWARTH.

SCHUMANN.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—In the July issue of THE GRAMOPHONE I received a snub from Mr. "Table Talk" on the subject of Schumann. It has not humbled me as much as it might have done, for though he is right—to be precise—Schumann was not "brought up a lawyer," yet he spent nearly three years studying law at Leipzig and Heidelberg Universities.

As he went at his mother's wish, not his own, for music was his one desire, no doubt the "law study" was not profound. In 1830—the third year—his mother ceased to oppose his wishes like a wise woman; but apart from the problematic effect of the law upon the young musician and his style, in the development of later years it was away from sentiment, and not towards it. As to the effect of Jean Paul Richter on Schumann, he was only fifteen when he sat at the feet of the poet and his sentimental phase passed, as our sentimental phases do, at that age.

He was more literary like his father, the bookseller, and what emotionalism he had was from his mother, who wanted him to be a priest because of his natural piety.

His later style was said to be a peculiar union of intellectuality, imagination, virility, and nobility. Probably his whimsical fancy and delightful sense of humour endear him to us as much as anything, and make the tragedy of his end the more pathetic.

With regard to the prominence of the piano in the concerto record of Cortot, I prefer that to the drowning of the pianist in most of the other records by the orchestra. Harriet Cohen can scarcely be heard in the Columbia one of Bach's lovely work.

Yours truly,

Lincoln.

EVA M. BICKNELL.

THE RECORDING OF THE ORCHESTRA.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Scrutator's letter appears to give humorous support to a theory which, though prevalent, seems to me at least open to doubt, to the effect that fibre users are romantics and that by means of steel needles you get more realism. I cannot but think that this is due largely to the fact that so many people are content to keep on comparing one gramophone performance with another and to neglect the only real test, comparison with the actual performance itself. Nothing is more easy than to go on, aiming chiefly at volume and "brilliance," while all the time getting farther and farther away from the real thing. It is easy, for instance, to overlook that one sound-box or needle may give less volume than another, and yet, owing to having better balance or definition of instrumental colour, may give an impression of a fuller orchestra, composed of more instruments, than does one with a loud brilliant tone but without much light or shade, and largely assisted by the metallic ring of the needle. At first the ear may be deceived by the bigger noise.

I have lately been occupied in prolonged tests of two excellent sound-boxes, and realising the futility of simply comparing one with the other, have been paying frequent visits to the opera and, seated in the gods, have endeavoured to check my impressions with the actual orchestra. Incidentally the result is rather disappointing to a keen gramophone supporter, because it has only tended to bring home to one that in this branch of music of all others we have a lot of way to make up. With a good sound-box and fibre needle I can get the voices of Toti dal Monte or Elizabeth Rethberg very much as they came to me in my lofty perch, but the orchestra is a far different thing. It is not

so much volume which is wanting as bigness or breadth of tone. You get at times more actual noise from the gramophone, but it is the difference between one loud voice and the murmur of a crowd. The faintest pianissimo from massed strings has more depth and breadth than one ever gets in reproduction. It is the atmosphere one misses and the sense that the sound comes from over a wide area. After all, is this to be wondered at when no serious attempt can apparently be made to record a big orchestra, as our present records are made by crowding a comparatively small number of instruments into a space which renders it difficult for the performers even to move? It seems to me you might as well try to represent autumn by throwing a sack of leaves from the top of a tree. It is surely unfair to blame the record for not reproducing what was never put into it, and for giving the impression of a few instruments in a confined space, which is precisely what was recorded. As a photographic friend of mine once remarked to an unsatisfied sitter, "one can only take what is in front of the camera."

The point I wish to make is that whatever the gramophone lacks it certainly is not what is called brilliance. My first impression on hearing the orchestra begin was always that it was less sharp and that the tone of the massed strings was not at all like whistling or bird song, but approximated more nearly to the kind of sound produced by the cricket or grasshopper by friction. Whether it will be possible eventually to overcome the difficulties of recording a big orchestra, properly spread out, I do not know, but I feel convinced that if it is the steel worshippers will be thoroughly dissatisfied.

Yours truly,

Purley.

LIONEL GILMAN.

CARMEN RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—My gramophonic interests being chiefly in vocal records, I always turn first in your very attractive journal to the interesting and informative contributions of Mr. Herman Klein. Accordingly, I was rather sorry to notice that in his two excellent reviews of records from Bizet's *Carmen* he overlooked several available records worthy of his attention. For instance, the following records of the *Toreador's Song* figure in the H.M.V. catalogue, in addition to those noticed by Mr. Klein.

By Titta Ruffo (D.B. 406): A powerful rendering, in which the singer gives us the full benefit of his stentorian tone. On the reverse side is a very telling reading of Meyerbeer's *Adamastor, re delle acque profonde* (from *L'Africana*), considered to be one of Ruffo's finest recordings. By Amato (D.B. 157): Reverse side, *Eri tu*. By Whitehill (D.B. 436): In English, with *Vulcan's Song* (*Philemon and Baucis*) on reverse, both excellent, and by Peter Dawson (C. 1007): Also in English, with *Largo al Factotum*, a splendid record at the price.

The following further renderings of the *Flower Song* may be of interest to collectors who do not already possess them:

D.B. 343. Superbly sung (in Italian) by John McCormack, with all the sensitive phrasing, faultless diction, and artistic, restrained delivery for which this artist is famous. Reverse side, *Che Gelida Manina* (*La Bohème*).

D. 739. In English, by Tudor Davies. Not too good. Full pressure maintained from start to finish without relaxation, therefore no light and shade, or variety of expression. Reverse, *Salve Dimora*.

D.B. 117. In Italian, by Caruso. I have played this record with all kinds of needles on two machines ("Lenthall" and "Grafonola"), but failed to get any very satisfactory result. The high notes lack richness and have too much "edge," and the final B flat sounds forced. Still, the record is worth getting for the superb rendering of *O Paradiso* on the other side.

D.B. 334. In French, by Martinelli. An excellent rendering by a highly gifted and very intelligent singer (*Salve Dimora* on reverse) and

D.B. 482. In French, by Anseau. Another fine rendering—passionate, but unhysterical and in taste. I rate this next to the McCormack. Reverse, *Champs Paternels* (*Joseph—Méhul*).

I may add that in my copy of the final duet for Carmen and José, by Farrar and Martinelli, the former "blasts" most abominably. On this score, despite the superb singing of these two, I would regard the more recently recorded version by Helen Sadover and Anseau as preferable. But is the "blasting" in the former record general?

Yours, etc.,

Wallasey.

G. F. THOMPSON.

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—May I assure your correspondent "B. D. W." that I omitted from my article on Berlioz "several little details" (which he kindly supplies) out of consideration for your space and your readers' patience? I had much to try to do in small compass, and felt that, though I should have enjoyed enlarging upon the fascinating character of the man, I ought not to take up the necessarily limited space allowed me with details which can all be found in readily accessible books. I happen to be an editor myself; and I am sure "B. D. W." will understand that room in correspondence columns can be found when it cannot be given in the body of the paper. The details in his July letter are interesting, but I should not have held it justifiable to retail all these at so much per page, in June—and I am sure the editor of THE GRAMOPHONE will strongly agree with me!

Yours faithfully,

London.

W. R. ANDERSON.

{He does.—ED.]

LUPPI AND MARDONES.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I was greatly pleased when reading the very interesting article on Bellini in the June issue of THE GRAMOPHONE to see mention made of a very fine singer who, in my opinion, has suffered from the neglect of gramophone lovers—Oreste Luppi. As it happens, my favourite voice is the basso, and it seems to me that this very magnificent voice is less popular among users of the gramophone than it might very well be. With the exception of Chaliapine, I doubt if one could call any of the great bassi popular, unless perhaps Journet. . . . Unfortunately Luppi is only obtainable on Fonotipia records which, in this country are very hard to obtain. But to anybody who can lay hands on his record of *Il lacerato spirito* I think Luppi's superiority will at once be apparent. I have heard records of this aria by four great bassi—Luppi, Mardones, Pinza, and Navarini—unfortunately I had no opportunity of ever hearing the De Angelis record—and they are all good, particularly the first three, but in my judgment Luppi's version is the finest though it has the disadvantage of a piano accompaniment. The latter is very apparent when shown up by the beautiful orchestral accompaniment in the Pinza record. Luppi's voice is heavy, much heavier than those of the other three, and very rich and resonant, but he has it under marvellous control—Mardones himself does not beat him here. I never heard any singer who could interpret either the opening recitative or the beautiful lines *Era serbato ad strazio d'infamia e di dolore* like Luppi. Pinza has a wonderfully sweet way of singing the lines *Resa al fulgor degl' angeli, prega, Maria, per me*, but I do not think that the whole performance is characterised by the same tragic dignity and sense of heart-break which pervades Luppi's. He is singing from his heart, whereas the others are merely executing performances—a most unusual thing for Mardones, who generally identifies himself completely with the character in which he is singing. Other fine Luppi records are Boito's *Ecco il Mondo* on the reverse of the above; the *Vecchia Zimarra* and a dainty *Mignon* duet with Pasini Vitale, both of which show how marvellously the great basso can modulate and control his heavy voice; a fine, fervent, yet beautifully controlled version of *Ah, de Tebro*, an aria also recorded by Pinza, which I was sorry to see omitted from the list of noteworthy Bellini records, and a good stirring rendering of the *Dio dell' or from Faust*. Luppi also appears in several concerted numbers on Fonotipia, and the way in which he conveys the sense of breathless haste by his singing in the final trio from *Faust*, with Pasini Vitale and Rossi, alone makes the purchase of the record well worth while. Another grand basso of whom Columbia give us all too little is José Mardones. His versions of Italian opera are the finest I have heard, not excluding those of Chaliapine. For instance, I regard Mardones' singing of the *Serenata* from *Faust* as a better piece of interpretation than Chaliapine's, while on the reverse side is a magnificent rendering of *La Calunnia è un venticello*, which leaves Chaliapine's version far behind. I can never decide which of the two I prefer when singing Verdi's *Infelice*; Mardones' lovely appealing singing of the aria is spoiled for me by a note unduly prolonged in the cadenza at the end; I prefer Chaliapine's cadenza. I am at present anxiously awaiting the chance to obtain Mardones' *Vieni, la mia vendetta* (Victor) to compare with Chaliapine's fine singing of the same piece on H.M.V.

Before quitting the subject, I must confess the overwhelming superiority of Chaliapine to all other bassi, or for that matter to all

other singers whatever, as displayed in his unique singing of Russian opera and folk-song. Had he never made another record than the *Song of the Volga Boatmen*, it would have placed him in a class by himself as a recording artist.

Kilkenny.

Yours truly,

W. T. E. C.

A USEFUL REMINDER.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—It is a well-known fact that the ordinary buyer of records is very conservative, prefers to buy the recognised "picks" of the various catalogues and consequently misses some really splendid recordings, that can be discovered only through patient exploration. It may interest your readers to hear of a few of these "un-boomed" records.

Taking first the ordinary H.M.V. catalogue, there is Alda, perhaps the finest living lyric soprano. *O mio babbino caro* and *Tes Yeux* are quite as fine, the former even finer than *Elle a fui*. Boninsegna is, in my humble opinion, inferior only to Destinn, and records better. Her Columbia records are all good except the 10in. records, which are very bad. D.B.492 is very fine indeed, but is about to be scrapped. Bori sings *Je veux vivre* much more tastefully than the particularly blatant Galli-Curci record of the same aria. *L'Alba*, a superlative Caruso, is coupled on D.A.121 with *Over there!* Casazza has a glorious mezzo voice, and in D.B.561 makes two capital records with de Muro, not so good as the Caruso-Homer combination, but still very commendable. All Clément's records are beautiful except D.A.143, which has a bad surface. De Muro is excellent in the great confession scene from *La Fanciulla del West* (D.B.551) and the Rhadames-Amneris record on the other side is almost as good as the one by Caruso and Homer. Perfect duets are those by Destinn and Dinh Gilly; Destinn sings beautifully the songs on D.B.645. To me all Farrar records are interesting, and the great majority lovely. The *Styrienne* from *Mignon* (D.B.654) is a jewel, and the duet with Jadlowker presents the highest perfection of two German-trained singers. Gadski has what the Germans term an *innige* voice and must have been a thrilling Aida. The Aida-Amneris duet (D.B.666) and the Aida-Amonasro duet (D.K.126) represent what is best in operatic recording. Jadlowker, the famous Russo-Polish tenor, gives the best rendering of *Che gelida manina* that I know. Johnson, a very famous Ramerrez renders *Ch'ella mi creda* gloriously. Exemplary renderings of the High Priest arias in *Zauberflöte* are those of Journet (D.B.613 and D.A.259). Martinelli's most beautiful singing is to be found in the jolly *Zaza* aria, *E un riso gentil*. Paoli deserves to be better known. I like his *Celeste Aida* best and *Viens, ô toi* is also very good. To those who know *Suor Angelica*, Randacio's record (D.B.181), *Senza Mamma* will be welcome; Lotte Lehmann, however, gives a better record of it on German H.M.V. All Clarence Whitehill's records are good except the Wagner excerpts sung in English, which are very badly recorded. Whitehill is unquestionably the greatest Wagnerian baritone, and the famous Whitehill-Jeritz combination at the recent Metropolitan performances of *Thaïs* should add additional interest to D.B.437, immeasurably superior to Ruffo and Formichi's renderings. Those who have bought one Zanelli record are sure at some time or other to buy the rest too; there is not a bad one among them.

Many of the records on the No. 2 catalogue are as good, many much better than the newer recordings. *Dio possente*, by Demuth (D.810) is a more pleasing record than those of Ruffo or de Luca. The Knüpfer records are perfectly magnificent, and among the finest bass records ever made. I can specially recommend D.805 and 807. At last two very lamentable cuts are re-issued: Farrar's splendid *Un bel di* and Hempel's *Ah! vous dirai-je*. These are both marvellous records and worth all those of Galli-Curci. Hempel's *Una voce* (*Frag' ich mein*) represents the pinnacle of coloratura singing; a voice even from top to bottom, a total absence of *voix blanche*, and a feeling for the meaning of the text. If anyone doubts that Hempel is the finest coloratura existing let him play D.B.352 and D.B.455 and compare them with D.B.262 and D.B.261. Moissi's records are really quite good and easily proclaim him the finest living actor; it may not be generally known in England that Moissi is a very pleasing singer as well.

In conclusion, might I ask the Editor to review catalogue No. 2, for the benefit of overseas readers, as the agencies do not stock them here, and ordering "on spec." is a great risk, as I found to my cost when I ordered D.B.399 and D.B.493—fine voices ruinously recorded.

Yours sincerely,

Stellenbosch, South Africa.

(Dr.) C. DE VILLIERS.

POLYDOR RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I have made some considerable trials of these records. As regards tone, I think them far superior to anything I have yet heard. Scratch varies, but in no case is it worse than on records of standard make here; and on many a good deal better. The following records I can highly recommend. PIANO (all played by Raoul von Koczalski): *Nocturnes, Op. 9, No. 2, and Op. 27, No. 2* (Chopin), 65786 (4 m.); *Gavotte and Musette* (Bach), 65792 (4 m.). (This is to my mind the most magnificent piano record in existence.) *Renata Walzer and Impression* (Koczalski) and *Albumblätter, Op. 124, No. 4 Walzer* (Schumann), 62442 (4). Played by Michael Zadora: *La Fileuse* (Raff), *Consolation 1 and 2* (Liszt), 19112 (2 m.). I agree with the writer last month in praising the records made by Heinrich Schlusnus, baritone. All I have heard are magnificent, especially 62364, 62365, 62366 (4). Songs of R. Strauss accompanied by the composer: 70660 (7) *Verschwiegene Liebe* and *Der Rattenfänger* (Wolf), 65574. *Blick, ich umher* (Tannhäuser), *Feuerzauber* (Walküre), 65574 (4 m.). Groenen, *Gesang Weyla's and Fussreise* (Wolf), 62407 (4) (the first absolutely thrilling). Some of Jadlowker's (tenor) records are excellent, especially *Warum?* and *O du mond'liche Nacht* (Tchaikovsky), 70645 (7). *Eros und Zur Johannismacht* (Grieg), 70639 (7). *Gute Nacht und Erstarrung* from Schubert's *Winterreise*, 72673 (7 m.). Of these last every word is clear. Of women singers I like particularly Sigrid Onegin: *Menuett d'Ecaudet* and *Jeunes fillettes* (Weckerlin), 70620 (7). *Die junge Schäferin* (Schubert) and *Sehnsucht nach dem Frühling*, 70635 (7). *Lord have mercy* (Bach's *Passion St. Matthew*), 72745 (7 m.). Irene Eden: *Magic Flute*, *Aria of the Queen of Night*, and *Rache Arie*, 65605 (4 m.), a revelation of coloratura singing. On the other hand, I do not care for Elisabeth Van Endert or Maria Olszewska, though in fairness be it added that I have not heard many of the latter's records. Of the violin records those of Vasa Prihoda are very fine and so is that of José Porta, 20079 (2), *Caprices 16 and 17* of Paganini.

On the whole these records have given me and friends here the greatest thrill since the early Brunswicks were issued. Ordinary fibres stand up well to them.

Yours faithfully,
EDWARD KOCH.

WAGNER ON POLYDOR AND H.M.V.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Some of your Wagnerian readers, who have not the scores, may be glad of some hints with regard to those Polydor records which materially help to fill up the gaps between the various *Ring* and other records already issued by the H.M.V.

Rheingold, Polydor 15849, Walter Kirchhoff, *Immer ist Undank* (Loge's Lament), followed by *Ueber Stock und Stein* (on reverse) as Loge watches the giants depart with Freia. This disc comes after H.M.V. D.677, *Alberich steals the gold*, and before the reverse side, *The descent to Nibelheim*.

72692.—*Erda's Warning* (Sigrid Onegin). This comes just before H.M.V. D.503, *Entry of the Gods* (when are we to have an uncut version, with all the voices, beginning with *Donner's* Summons, say on three sides?).

Walküre. H.M.V. D.678 (a) *Prelude, etc.*, followed by Polydor 72867, Lauritz Melchior singing *Friedmund darf ich nicht heissen*. This is a portion of Siegmund's Narrative. The reverse, *Siegmund heiss, ich* is not so good as H.M.V. D.679 (b) as the orchestra stops immediately after Siegmund has finished singing.

H.M.V. D.678 (b) *Siegmund sees the sword hilt*, followed by Polydor 72906, Lotte Lehmann, *Der Männe Sippe*, where Sieglinde shows Siegmund the sword in the tree (*Eugen Onegin* on reverse).

H.M.V. D.679 (a) *Siegmund greets the Spring Night*. Polydor 72934, Lauritz Melchior and Frida Leider *Du bist der Lenz*, followed by *Wie dir die Stirn* (*The Love Duet*).

H.M.V. D.679 (b) *Siegmund draws out the sword. Finale*. Thus we now have five sides with the love music complete, except for a few bars of Sieglinde's music cut out (unaccountably) from D.679 (b).

Polydor 62446, Fritz Soot, *Zauberhaft bezähmt ein Schlaf*. Where Siegmund gazes on the sleeping Sieglinde after being warned by Brünnhilde D.681 (a). (The reverse is Tannhäuser's *Song to Venus*, Act I.)

Polydors have nothing fresh for Act III.

Siegfried.—There are several Polydors with all three verses of the *Forging Song* on one side and the two verses of the *Hammer Song* on the other, but apparently none brings in the *Finale*

which appears on D.700 (a). On this, however, Tudor Davies sings only two verses and one verse respectively on the one side.

H.M.V. D.561, *Forest Murmurs*, can now be supplanted by Polydor 65696, Otto Wolf, *Waldweben* (one side). This starts a few bars later than the D.561, but Siegfried's vocal part is there in full, though the record doesn't quite reach the change to the bird music (key E major).

Polydor 61849 (10in.), Kraus and Herwig, *Ist mir doch fast, etc.*, This takes the place of D.561 (b) bringing in the bird voice, and should be followed by D.700 (b) *Mime's Treachery* and D.701 (a) *Siegfried follows the Forest Bird*. The *finale* is more complete on this than on the reverse of Polydor 61849, *Lustig im Leid*, which therefore becomes superfluous.

Act III.—No further help from Polydors.

Götterdämmerung. Siegfried's Rhine Journey. The new Columbia record, L.1636, is better than the old H.M.V. D.559. It starts some few bars later, but there are no cuts except the duet (in full on H.M.V. D.703) and it has the correct operatic ending, and not the concert version.

Polydor 72739. Sigrid Onegin in the *Waltraute* scene, *Seit er von dir geschieden*, followed by *So sitzt er*. No cuts. This comes after H.M.V. D.704.

Polydor 72831. Curt Taucher in Siegfried's Narrative, *Mime heiss ein mürrischer Zwerg*, followed by *Im Leid zu dem Wipfel, etc.* This follows D.705 (a), *Prelude* and *Rhinemaidens Scene*, and should be followed by Polydor 65696, Otto Wolf singing *Siegfried's Death* (the reverse of *Waldweben*, mentioned in the Siegfried records above). This leads up to D.502, *Siegfried's Funeral March* and the *Finale*, on three sides, D.705-6.

Meistersinger.—Polydor 65271, Plöschke and van Endert sing the duet between Sachs and Eva in full on two sides, and can be substituted for the cut version on one side of D.750.

Polydor 61848 (10in.). *Gleich, Meister, Hier und Am Jordan Sankt Johannes stand*, sung by Plöschke and Henke just fills the gap between Act III., *Prelude*, D.752, and the *Wahn Monologue*, D.753. Several Polydors seems to have the monologue in full on both sides.

Tristan und Isolde.—Polydor 65916-8. *Tristan Prelude* on three sides and *Tannhäuser Overture* on the other three sides. *Tannhäuser* has two small cuts in the *Pilgrims' Chorus*, just before and after the *Venusburg* music respectively, but the tone and rendering is so magnificent that one can forgive the cuts (inevitable on three sides only).

The *Tristan Prelude* is equally fine, and is in full, with Wagner's own concert finish, and this version is frequently performed at the "Proms.," when the *Liebestod* is not played in conjunction with the *Prelude*.

Polydor 72692, Sigrid Onegin, *Einsam wachend* (reverse, *Erda's Warning*, mentioned above under *Rheingold*). This might be substituted after breaking off from Part 3 of the *Love Duet* (D.737) at the right moment, as it gives Brangaene's voice in contrast to Isolde's. (Florence Austral sings both parts on D.737.) It also brings in the lovely music at the end of her song, which is then repeated, in another key, at the commencement of D.737, Part 4.

Polydor 65725, Theodor Lattermann, *Tatest du's wirklich*, followed by *Dünkte zu wenig*. This is King Mark's soliloquy, and should be followed by Polydor 65695, Otto Wolf *Wohin nun Tristan scheidet*, where Tristan sings to Isolde just before the end of Act II.

The reverse, *Wie sie selig*, is Tristan's vision in Act III., and, being vocal, is preferable to the Columbia orchestral version on L.1551.

I hope these notes may be useful to those people who like playing their Wagner records in their proper sequence.

Beethoven's *Kreutzer* and *Frühlings Sonatas*, presumably complete on four and three records respectively (65760-6) are well worth acquiring for the beautiful tone of the piano. But why be landed with a duplicate copy of the slow movement from the *Frühlings Sonata* (65765 and 65766)?

Yours faithfully,

Muswell Hill.

MAURICE W. BATEMAN.

NOTE.—The pages usually devoted to *The Forum* are reluctantly omitted this month, but will reappear in September. Interesting correspondence for which no room can be found must be acknowledged from the following:—Arthur Anson (who has moved from Kandy to Siena), F. T. Page (Lyttelton, New Zealand), Walter S. Cropper (Chesterfield), K. Sorabji (London, N.W.), Philip Marchant (Invercargill, New Zealand), H. F. Wiggin (Chatham), H. H. Flint (Leicester), and James Rainford (St. Helens).

NOTES AND QUERIES

[Each comment or question should be written clearly on a separate slip of paper and addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, W. 1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given for reference.]

(323) **Hymns.**—Might it not be possible to draw in the religious community if gramophone companies produced some of the beautiful hymns, by good singers, to tunes that all know? I search many catalogues in vain for such. Could not that feeling and sympathetic tenor, Mr. Sydney Coltham, give us some, with piano or harp accompaniment?—J. T. A., Highbury.

(324) **Shepherd's Hey (Percy Grainger).**—I should be glad if you would kindly let me know which of the following renderings you consider to be the best "Shepherd's Hey": (a) H.M.V. D.159; (b) Columbia L.1006; (c) Vocalion X.9107?

[Mr. S. K. Rutherford, consulted, replies: "(a) H.M.V. D.159: Being an old recording this is rather lacking in volume, and the various special effects in the score of this piece are decidedly thin. (b) Columbia L.1006: Also an old recording, but it has a very satisfactory volume; have not heard it in the new pressing, but the old was good, apart from the surface. Xylophone is very clear, and timpani at the end are very well and good provided a loud needle is not used. All Columbias 'go' on loud needles. (c) Vocalion X.9107: The orchestra used in this appears very small, brass is very 'cheap.' Glockenspiel and xylophone are both present. My opinion is (1) Columbia, (2) H.M.V., (3) Vocalion. It is frequent in performance of this work to find the glockenspiel omitted. The other percussion is usually put in and without the glockenspiel is as much as the usual four players can manage. The Columbia has a satisfying 'weight' at the end sadly lacking in many of Wood's newer records."—Ed.]

(325) **Records Wanted.**—Can any of your readers inform me whether there is a record of the following bass solo from Meyerbeer's "L'Etoile du Nord," "O Jours Heureux" "O lieti di" "Gone are the days," French, Italian, or English? Plançon's record has been withdrawn, as also Payan's, from the French H.M.V. catalogues.—T. A. R., Balham.

(326) I have been using Columbia soft needles for some time because these give a good tone and are inclined to subdue the surface noise. Do you advise me to stop using these needles and use the Petmecky brand? I find that a Petmecky needle in a Pianina sound-box is the most realistic reproduction on a piano record that I have ever heard. The only fault that I have to find with the Petmecky needle is that it produces rather a lot of surface noise. Can you recommend to me any Carrie Tubb records? Also can you tell me of the most brilliant coloratura soprano record in the gramophone catalogues? I have Tetrassini's "Una Voce" and "Io son Titania" and Galli-Curci's "Nella Calma."

(327) **Russian Gipsy Songs.**—Can you tell me where records of these, sung by the nomads themselves, can be obtained? My customer says they can be obtained, he thinks, in Vienna and the Balkans.—G. E. M. J., Nottingham.

(328) **Competitions: A Suggestion.**—"The best half dozen records suitable for opening an evening with the gramophone." Apart from difference of people and their ideas, one can be sure many gramophonists want to begin by giving a favourable impression to their hearers.—S. B., Dewsbury.

(329) **Lener Quartet.**—Re the Editor's strictures on the Lener Quartet record, L.1460, pages 409 and 410, April number, and his final note. I have heard from Columbia to-day that "both the selections in question were re-recorded over a year ago and all records since that date are of the new recording." With regard to H.M.V. D.B.58 by Moiseivitch, "Jeux d'Eau" of Ravel's—frequently lauded in THE GRAMOPHONE, this is not obtainable, but H.M.V. tell me they hope to re-record it shortly. The old master has broken down.—N. D. S., Kendal.

(330) **Newspapers.**—Many papers give gramophone notes, some regularly like the *Daily News* on Saturdays and the *Daily Herald* on alternate Tuesdays. But lots are quite irregular in regard to reports on new issues, etc. I for one would buy a paper specially to see the report given, if gramophone notes appeared regularly.—S. B., Dewsbury.

[The *Daily Telegraph* has notes by Robin Legge on records each second Saturday in the month.—PICCOLO.]

(331) **Violin Records.**—Which are the twelve best violin records (needle cut)?—W. H., Ware.

(332) **Mignon.**—What is the best "Io son Titania" ("Mignon")?—W. I. H., Ware.

(333) **The Dance of the Hours.**—I am shortly purchasing a record of the "Dance of the Hours" from "La Gioconda" (Ponchielli). Could any reader advise me as to which is the best recording?—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(334) **Bach and Handel.**—I should like to bring to the notice of your readers, and, I hope, of the recording genii, the following statistics from the H.M.V. and Columbia catalogues, on the matter of recordings from choral works by Handel and Bach. H.M.V.:—Handel: 37 different records: six recorded two times, one recorded four times, and one recorded six times, making a total of 51. Bach: One record. Columbia:—Handel: 25 different records, three recorded twice, making a total of 28. Bach: One record. Grand total: Handel, 79; Bach, 2. The figures speak for themselves.—K. S. W., Leeds.

(335) **Works for Recording.**—"Gramophone Interpretation Policies." While endorsing Mr. F. W. Schuster's admirable letter in the July issue, may I in turn suggest the following additions: Debussy, "Iberia" and "La Mer"; Delius, "Appalachia Variations," and lesser known symphonic poem "Paris"; Ravel, the well-known "Rhapsodie Espagnole"; Vaughan Williams' delightful "Norfolk Rhapsodies." The re-issue of "La Boutique Fantasque" in entirety, in place of H.M.V. selection (Dr. Boult), now withdrawn (this is long overdue). A new recording of Norman O'Neill's delicious "Blue Bird" suite (only obtainable on old Regal discs), by the Columbia Company. Arensky's "Variations on a Theme of Tchaikovsky's" deserves mention. Also we await Brahms' Nos. 3 and 4 symphonies, and "Piano Concerto No. 2" in particular. I take it we shall get Elgar's "No. 2 Symphony" and "Falstaff" eventually. The best often come last.—E. G. W., Golders Green.

(336) **Jungheron Tanze.**—I should like to know if there is a record made of "Jungheron Tanze," waltz by Gungl. I understand this is a very old piece, and I cannot find it in any lists.—W. S., Burnley.

(337) **Frieda Hempel.**—With regard to the article last month on Frieda Hempel. I fear it will now be very difficult to obtain a copy of her record of "Wohin?" and "Ungeduld." Nine months ago I was only able to obtain the record after trying eight shops in this city. Your contributor does not mention Madame Hempel's Polydor records. Her "Batti, batti" from "Don Giovanni" (85301) is a most beautiful record; the reverse, a duet from the "Magic Flute" for Pamina and Papageno is splendidly sung by Selma Kurz and Heinrich Schlusmus.—J. H. B., Edinburgh.

(338) **"Waukin'."**—In the review of the records by John Goss in your July number, "N. P." refers to "Aye waukin' O" as a labour song sung in the Hebrides in the course of shrinking a web of cloth. This, however, is incorrect, as the word "wauk" used in the song is a Scottish form of "wake," and the title of the song in English would be "Always awake."—J. H. B., Edinburgh.
(Corrections also from A. M. M., Ross, and D. B. M., Edinburgh.)

(339) **Virtz Sound-boxes.**—It would be interesting to have the views of those of your readers who are the fortunate possessors of sound-boxes made by Mr. Virtz. According to his advertisement he makes them for orchestral, vocal, and chamber music. My experience only covers the latter with fibre needles, and I must confess I never enjoyed pure string tone as Mr. Virtz gives it to you before I got one of his sound-boxes. It is a perfect joy to me for strings only, while I must confess the piano is on some records a bit disappointing it improves on others. For instance, Schumann's "Quintet" (Vocalion) and the harp is splendid. I wonder if some of your readers think as I do and would give their views on his sound-boxes for orchestral and vocal effects, for if the results are as good as with strings these sound-boxes deserve to be more widely known.—W. A. H., Church Stretton.

(340) **Organ Records.**—Having felt dissatisfied with the organ records issued by the English companies I sent for a sample of the Polydor make, and was astounded at the marvellous fidelity to the pipe organ tone. I have since sent for six others, and I can very highly recommend all of them as really beautiful records of the organ; the mellow pipe tone is as near perfect as one could wish, so different to the "Concertina-Harmonium" tone of many of our English recording companies. I hope that more will be issued.—W. H. P., Gloucester.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES

[Answers must be written on separate slips and should be forwarded to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1, as early in the month as possible.]

(211) **Snows of Yesteryear.**—There are fourteen single-sided records by Ancona in the Victor catalogue of discontinued records, of which special pressings will be made by the Victor Company. Particulars as to how these records may be obtained are contained in this catalogue, which is furnished by the company.—F. H. M., San Diego.

(251) **Best Records.**—Best records of:—Norman Allin: "Twilight of Gods" ("Hagen's Watch and Call"); Clara Butt: "Abide with me" and "God shall wipe away all tears" (Col.). Destournel: "Deh vieni" and "Vissi d'arte," also "Mi chiamano Mimi" and "Tacea la notte." Hempel: "Du mine seele" and "Schlafe." Mullings: "Prize Song" and "On with the Motley," also "Flower Song" and "When the stars . . ." Williams (Evan): "Open the Gates" and "Be thou faithful."—W. H., Herts.

(268) **Le Chasseur Maudit.**—The Columbia record of this is badly cut.—F. H. M., San Diego.

(279) **The Ring.**—J. T., Manchester, will probably find his requirements ideally supplied in Gustav Kobbe's "Wagner's Music Dramas Analysed." The book is handy in size and contains a beautifully clear exposition of each drama from both the musical and the dramatic points of view—has a notation of the leading motive and an index to them. In addition to "The Ring," "Tristan and Isolde," the "Meistersingers," and "Parsifal" are dealt with, and in all respects the book approaches perfection. It is published by Geo Schirmer, of New York, and will be obtained by W. H. Smith and Son to order. Price about 4s. If any difficulty is experienced in obtaining it, I shall be pleased to assist. I have already obtained and given away several copies.—B. L. W., Ealing.

(283) **Best Records.**—1. "Gavotte in E" (Bach), by New Queen's Hall Orchestra (Col.), coupled with "Rondino" (Beethoven). 2. "Le Cygne," Squire (H.M.V.). 3. "Ave Maria" (Gounod), Bronskaja (Col.). 4. "Miserere, Trovatore," by Destinn and Zenatello (Col.), it is the second best.—W. H., Herts.

(284) **Best Records.**—1. Stracciari: "Largo al factotum" and "Cortigiani" (Col.). 2. Stracciari: "Eri tu che macchiavi" and "Il balen" (Col.). 3. Stracciari: "Prologue" ("Pagliacci") and "Toreador Song" (Col.). 4. Formichi: "Credo in un Dio" and "Te deum—Tosca" (Col.). 5. Stracciari: "Ode verdanni" and "Lo vedremo" (Fonotipia). 6. Dawson: "Madamina," two parts (H.M.V.). 7. Demarey: "Paillassie—Prologue" and "Noël Païen" (Imperial). 8. Formichi: "Legend and Air" from "Samson and Delilah" (Col.). 9. Battistini: "Bella e sol" and "Voce fatal" (H.M.V.). 10. De Gogorza: "Promesse de mon avenir" and "Vision Fugitif" (H.M.V.). 11. Formichi: "Two airs from 'Thais'" (Col.). 12. Stevens: "Lord God of Abraham" and "Trumpet shall sound" (Vocalion).—W. H., Ware.

(285) **Home-made Horns.**—In my article in the December, 1923, issue I described the method of building a horn of the "Dog" picture type, and the instructions apply equally well to the present case. In building, use plenty of flour paste between the layers of strawboard, which should not exceed $\frac{1}{16}$ in. in thickness. Three layers of this thickness will suffice. Chamfer or bevel the edges of the strawboard with rough glass paper so that there is no break in the joints, which should be equally distributed round the circumference of the horn. When thoroughly dried, which will require at least a week unless heat is applied, the horn should receive two coats of one of the quick-drying walnut or other varnish stains now commonly used for household purposes. In the drying out process the use of internal liners such as pot lids of varying sizes will prevent warping.—C. B., Ashted.

(291) **Loud Machines.**—This matter is dealt with at some length in Mr. Seymour's "Reproduction of Sound." The main reason, apart from the costliness of all devices which depend on air pressures, for the failure of the Auxetophone, the Stentorphone, etc., to establish themselves in the gramophone market is the great difficulty of ensuring the continued efficiency of the vibrating valves employed in such systems. Even under the most favourable conditions the escape of air, which is always under considerable pressure, is sufficient to cause a most unpleasant hiss which is to some more disagreeable than the most persistent scratch. To

describe the systems it will be sufficient to say that if one imagines two combs placed side by side so that the teeth of one closes the gaps of the other, one will have an excellent idea of the nature of the valves employed. The air, which is fed by pipe to one side of the combs, is released in puffs by the action of the needle on the record, said needle being attached to the outside comb, which is hinged to allow it to make a greater or lesser gap between it and its fellow in accordance with the amplitude of the waves imprinted on the record. The puffs coincide, of course, in amplitude and period with the recorded waves of sound, and thus in turn are heard as sound by the human ear. The volume of sound varies according to the pressure of air fed to the combs. Great volume is possible, but the result is emphatically not music, in my opinion. Patent Specification, No. 10468, of 1903, Parsons, may usefully be studied. Pathé also produced a somewhat similar machine in 1906 for use with phono-cut discs. In addition to these air pressure devices, friction relay devices have been patented on various occasions. The extra volume produced by these machines depends on the clutching action of a friction shoe or band brake in conjunction with a rotating cylinder of amber or similar material. Here again the frequency of mechanical breakdown renders their common use unlikely.—C. B., Ashted.

(300) **Cracked Records.**—I fear your only cure is to sell the record for waste and buy a new one. But you might first of all try sticking it together carefully and then going over the grooves at the crack with a fine needle held at right angles to the record in a pair of pliers whose jaws have been heated to red heat. This costs nothing and may do some good.—P. W.

(307) **Folk Songs.**—The following are a few good folk-song records: De Gogorza, D.A.181-2; Destinn and Dinh Gilly, D.J.101; Caruso, D.B.142; Julia Culp, D.A.153; Radford E.351; Evan Williams, D.A.387 (H.M.V.). Coyle, 3369 (Col.); and Roland Hayes' Negro Spirituals (Vocalion).—J. H. B., Edinburgh.

(310) **César Franck Sonata.**—I have timed this as follows:—Side 1, $3\frac{1}{2}$ mins.; 2, 3 mins.; 3, $3\frac{1}{2}$ mins.; 4, $4\frac{1}{2}$ mins.; 5, $4\frac{1}{2}$ mins.; 6, $3\frac{1}{2}$ mins.; 7, 3 mins.; 8, $3\frac{1}{2}$ mins.; total $28\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. I have not taken less than a quarter of a minute as the lowest fraction, but it will be near enough for practical purposes.—S. F. D. H.

(311) **Leila Megane.**—The best record of Leila Megane is "A Summer Night" (D. 787). This displays her beautiful voice, and the recording not only of the voice, but of the cello and piano is as perfect as has yet been obtained. You should also have D.674 and D.675 ("Sea Picture"—Elgar). Of the Welsh records E.266 is the best, though E.289 has the better music, but the orchestral accompaniment drowns her voice, and is likewise unsuitable to the music. I fancy the sale of these two Welsh records must have been tremendous, and surely justifies the demand for more records of Leila Megane's Welsh singing. But I hope she will not forget that there is plenty of good Welsh music apart from compositions and arrangements of her husband.—L. H., Denbigh.

(313) **Chopin's "Funeral March."**—An excellent recording of Chopin's "Funeral March" is by the Royal Guards Band with the "Dead March in Saul" (Handel) on the reverse side (Col. 187, 12in., dark blue, 4s. 6d.). The removal of the grille would in no way affect the tone of the H.M.V. cabinet or table grand. On the contrary, it would greatly improve it, as it causes a great deal of interference. The grille is really only fitted as an ornament.—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(317) **N.T.A.**—The answer is in the negative.—P. W.

(319) **Papier Mâché Horns.**—Mr. Balmain informs me that papier mâché horns of all shapes and sizes can be obtained from the Scientific Supply Stores, 80, Newington Causeway, S.E. 1.—P. W.

(320) **A Browning Record.**—The Browning record referred to was made over 30 years ago on one of the first Edison phonographs to reach this country. It was intended to form one of a "great library of voices" to comprise the human utterances of noted men in all countries. I think I am correct in saying that the original is to be found at the headquarters of the Robert Browning Guild, Browning Hall, Browning Street, Walworth, S.E., where, from time to time, audiences can listen to the poet's curious recital (with self-interruptions) of "How they brought the good news to Aix." It was thought at one time that copies of the original master could be made and put through the modern process of record making, but I have not heard that this has been done.—W. J. W. H., Manchester.

Gramophone Societies' Reports

(Held over from the July number.)

EAST LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The eighty-eighth monthly meeting was held at headquarters, Langthorne Restaurant, 15, Broadway, Stratford, on Saturday, June 20th. The attendance proved to be a record one for a summer meeting, which clearly shows the enthusiasm of the members and their appreciation of the activities of the Committee. The programme was made up of twenty records selected from a carefully prepared card index system of records submitted by members for demonstration. By this progressive method the "one-man" programme is abolished—an obsolete and too long standing evil amongst most societies—and instead is substituted a programme to which as many as twenty members contribute. It can easily be seen that a varied and ideal programme can always be provided monthly, the musical tastes of all members readily appeased, repetition of the same record avoided, and all members present much more interested.

As a curtain raiser to the programme proper, the hon. secretary demonstrated the new Saxi super sound-box on a number of records from the June supplements. This sound-box proved to be by far the best large diaphragm box used at the Society and any fear of loss of brilliancy and disposition towards tubbiness has been overcome by the inventor. Perhaps the method he has adopted by the shortened stylus bar has obviated this usually noticed defect in the majority of large boxes.

Amongst the June records a welcome addition to the ranks of recorders is John Goss on the H.M.V. One record of his *And when I die*, will probably be remembered by thousands of ex-service men and appreciated by them, but it would hardly be advisable to play this record to your ardent prohibitionist friend. We look forward to more from John Goss in the future. The Parlophone Company have looked after the interest of the opera lover by records beautifully sung by Bettendorf and Fumigalli who sing *One fine day* (*Madame Butterfly*), *They call me Mimi* (*La Bohème*), *Love and Music* (*Tosca*), and *Peace, peace oh God* (*La Forza del Destino*). The playing of a theme and variations from Schubert's *Die Forelle* by the Mayer Mahr Quintette (Parlophone 10293) was greatly enjoyed.

The Society is fortunately, apart from music, well catered for during the hot summer months, for during the interval, ices, iced lemonade and trifle, and the atmosphere rendered more pure by electric fans, made quite cooling subjects for the interval refreshments.

A very good programme followed the interval and amongst the records played *Gipsy Airs* violin solo by Heifetz, *Senta's Ballad* sung by Bettendorf, and *Caro Nome* sung by Barrientos met with most applause from the audience.

Two new members were made and the Hon. Secretary will be pleased to communicate to any prospective members. The next meeting of the Society will be held on Saturday, July 18th.—W. J. WORLEY, *Hon. Secretary*, 209, Masterman Road, East Ham, E. 6.

CARDIFF AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—On May 14th our Secretary, Mr. E. G. Jones, provided a programme of the music of Schubert (1797–1828), giving first of all a brief sketch of the composer's life. It is a soon-told story, and some of us experienced once again the old regret that the career of this most lovable musician should have ended so early. His music was not the fruit of long cultivation and laborious toil, and shaping; it sprang from his heart joyous and delicate, prodigal as the song of a bird. On account of this very quality, some of it can occasionally be pruned to advantage, but much of his other work is flawless in its finished perfection. There were very many glorious moments in this programme. To the writer some of the outstanding records were: *Die Musensohn* (Gerhardt), *Die Forelle* (Olga Haley), *Auf dem Wasser* (Olga Haley), a trio of beautiful songs beautifully sung—melodies that lingered long in the memory; the *Scherzo* from the *B-flat Trio* (Sammons, Tertis and Hobday); first movement of the immortal *Unfinished* (Royal Albert Hall Orchestra); the *Minuet* from the *A minor Quartet* (Elman String Quartet); and *Impromptu, Op. 142, No. 3* (Paderewski)—a really splendid record this, one of the finest piano discs the writer has yet come across. We are grateful to Mr. Jones for the very enjoyable evening. Gramophones were supplied through the kindness of Mr. Charles Kinshott.

Mr. G. L. Deacon, on June 11th, gave an equally interesting programme—Gilbert and Sullivan. It is late in the day to shower

praises upon these perennials, but the writer had been exiled from them for a considerable period, and upon renewing the acquaintance was delighted once again with the amazing vitality of the operas: a sparkling libretto wedded to sparkling music scored in a brilliant and entrancing way. Personal preference would mark the following records as the most attractive: *Sun whose rays* and *A more humane Mikado* (Mikado); *When our gallant Norman foes* (Yeomen); *No possible doubt* (Gondoliers); and the *Pirates' Chorus* (Pirates of Penzance).

We must thank Mr. Deacon for the admirable way in which he arranged the programme, and for giving comments on, and the story of, each opera dealt with, which were most helpful. Acknowledgements are due to Messrs. Godfrey and Messrs. Dale Forty for supplying respectively the gramophone and various records.

No meetings will take place during July and August, but in September the Society will hold a general meeting for the election of officers and committee for the forthcoming winter session. The Secretary will send full details of this gathering to all members in due course. In the meantime, members are exhorted to keep the Society well in mind, and to endeavour to secure their friend's promises to enrol when September comes.—TREVOR PRICE, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

DEWSBURY AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The annual members' meeting of the above Society was held in the Moot Hall, Dewsbury, on Tuesday last, when the following officers and committee were elected for the coming year: President: Mr. G. H. Hirst (Dewsbury); Hon. Secretary: Mr. K. Walker (Dewsbury); Chairman: Mr. H. Pritchard (Batley); Vice-Chairman: Mr. S. Brasher (Dewsbury); Committee: Messrs. J. H. Brown (Batley), J. W. Thornes (Dewsbury), R. D. Keighley (Batley), George Hirst (Dewsbury), and H. Broadbent (Dewsbury).

The Society has met with great success, and credit is due to the past committee and members as a whole for the way in which they have worked together. The future is very bright, and there is plenty of work for the new committee before the next session. It is proposed to draw up a complete syllabus for next winter, including musical programmes, musical talks, monthly reviews of new records, competition nights, members' debates on the gramophone and matters appertaining thereto. The future is contemplated with great enthusiasm by the Society members. Anyone with a taste for good music will be well advised to join the Society, full particulars may now be obtained from the Secretary, K. WALKER, 2, Clement Terrace, Savile Town Dewsbury.

DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The combination of a bright June evening, a holiday atmosphere, and the provision of light refreshments, caused the closing meeting of the Society for the session 1924–25 to assume a less serious character than has been customary since its inception. This was particularly evident in comparing the competition of records which was held with a similar one in March. Those who submitted records did so in most cases in the spirit of adding to the enjoyment of a pleasant social evening, rather than as serious musical contributions; and it is well in any society that this aspect should not be entirely lacking. The winning record was *Musica Proibita* (Gastalden) sung by Caruso; for the second place an equal number of marks was gained by two strongly unequal records, *A la luz de la luna* (Caruso and de Gogorza) and the exquisite *Sandman's Song* from *Hansel and Gretel*. The fact that Dublin has recently been visited by the D'Oyly Carte Company probably accounted for the inclusion of three Gilbert and Sullivan records. Two from *Ruddigore* (which H.M.V. has recently recorded in full) gave us an opportunity of listening to the same singers whom a couple of weeks before we had seen and heard in the flesh. Of these Miss Eileen Sharpe may be singled out as exceptionally pleasing. Eighteen records were submitted. After the results of the competition had been announced the Recording Secretary made a few informal remarks on the work of the session, dwelling especially upon the high musical standard which had been maintained in the Society's programmes. He also expressed, on behalf of the members, their gratitude to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. N. C. Webb, for all that he had done to bring the Society into being, and to set it upon a sure footing. Mr. Webb having briefly replied, the meeting concluded. The annual business meeting will be held on Thursday, October 8th.—H. M. HARRISS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.



THE NEW-POOR PAGE

Half-Crown and Two-Shilling
records good on both sides



AT the Conference at the Central Hall, Westminster, last month it seemed to me that the makers of cheap records did not give them quite the prominence such records deserve, and which it would have been well to their interest to have given in these hard times when everyone needs to get value for money. If I had had time I would have given a special demonstration comprising one record from each series of specially good recordings priced at 2s. and 2s. 6d. In the 2s. class I should have shown the IMPERIAL violin solos and the GRAFTON jazz records in which the drum appears. In the 2s. 6d. class I should have shown the brass band recording of REGALS, together with an example of William Thomas' tenor songs. ZONO's would have been represented by one of Browning Mummary's popular songs and a violin and mustel organ record of the Southgate sisters. I should have shown a SCALA record of Tudor Davies, there would have been both serious and light pianoforte solos from the HOMO list, and I should not have forgotten to show a pungent ACTUELLE jazz record with the effects they so well introduce into them. ACO would have been represented under several headings but John Thorne's songs would have been first favourite, with Peggy Cochrane's violin solos and the beautifully spoken and recorded nursery tales following. BELTONAS would have supplied one of Minnie Mearns' Scots songs, a popular song by Henry Drummond or John Roberts, one of the altogether delightful kiddies' records by the Palm Beach Marimba Band, and one of their records showing the drum so perfectly, *Dagger Dance* or *Under the Burmese Moon* for preference. WINNERS would have supplied a wind quartette, one of Marie Novellos pianoforte records and a music hall song by Mr. Fred Granger. PARLOPHONE would have filled the hall with sweet tone from their orchestral records by Edith Lorand and the jazz recordings of Vincent Lopez. All these would have been safe lines to follow for good value and I hope that by mentioning them now I am making some amends for having no time to call attention to them on Great Thursday.

Good records are fewer this month but I must mention the following:—

ACO.—An ORCHESTRAL record first—*Cortège* (Masquerade) Lacome, because it shows the kettle-drums. A VIOLIN SOLO by Peggy Cochrane, *Melodie* (Tchaikovsky). A perfectly enunciated CONTRALTO SONG, *Bless thou the Lord*. A good VOCAL DUET, *It was a lover and his lass*.

BELTONA.—A high-brow song sung by Ethel Kemish, SOPRANO, *Love went a riding* (Frank Bridge). *I'm alone* and another song from the *Lily of Killarney*, sung by Minnie Mearns, CONTRALTO, also by the same singer a good record of *Silent, O Moyle*. A charmingly sung popular song (BARITONE) *O Taheite*.

IMPERIAL.—A bright little PIANOFORTE recording of Schumann's *Polish Dance* (No. 1). The *Pagliacci Prologue*, well sung in English by Robert Howe, BARITONE. The best, yes, quite the very best record of the POPULAR SONG, *The Toy Drum Major*, I have yet heard. The whole thing is staged and the side drum entirely convincing.

PARLOPHONE.—We are exceedingly fortunate this month, we have two ORCHESTRAL records by Edith Lorand, one disc is two numbers from *Cleopatra* and the other is two favourite *Strauss Waltzes*. But there is only one record by Vincent Lopez, the great JAZZ specialist, *Sing Loo*.

REGALS.—A really well written new FOX-TROT, *Peter Pan*. A mélange of *Popular Songs*, transcribed for Herman Darewski's ORCHESTRA.

ZONO.—A nearly perfect BRASS BAND record of certain well-chosen portions of Berlioz' *Faust*. A beautiful SOPRANO SONG, sung by Blanche Tomlin, *Unmindful of the Roses*.

* * *

From the foregoing I am keeping the following at home:—

SOPRANO	. <i>Unmindful of the Roses</i> .	ZONO.
CONTRALTO	. <i>Silent, O Moyle</i> .	BELTONA.
BARITONE	. <i>O Taheite</i> .	BELTONA.
VIOLIN	. <i>Melodie</i> .	ACO.
ORCHESTRAL	. <i>Cleopatra</i> .	PARLO.
JAZZ	. <i>Sing Loo</i> .	PARLO.

* * *

Although published at 4s. 6d. I must mention as a real new-poor investment a 12in. string quartette record on the HOMO list, Tchaikovsky's *Scherzo in D*; it is the best recording of a string quartette I have and every stroke of the bow tells out. My most critical friends are satisfied with the playing.

* * *

N.B.—I have purposely refrained from giving catalogue information because I wish readers to get the lists containing any numbers they fancy from their dealers, and then if they do not like the pair on the record I have mentioned they may be tempted to try another record of the same series.

Everyone should remember that machines having small horns (resonators) will not respond fully to the tone of instruments having large resonators or large resonating columns of air.

H. T. B.